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A COMPARISON OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION
MOTIVES IN ORGANIZED SPORTS

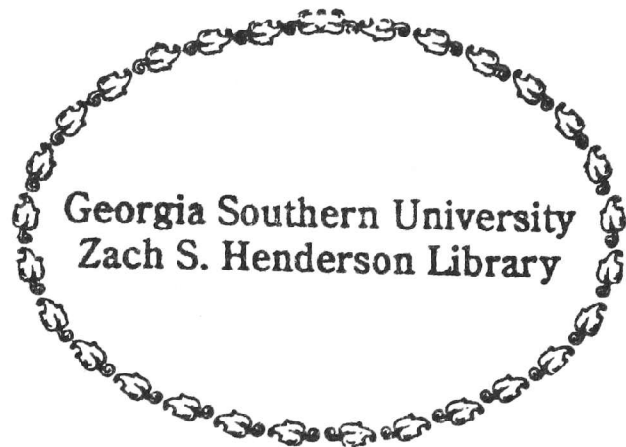
Kirsty L. Carrihill

**A COMPARISON OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION
MOTIVES IN ORGANIZED SPORTS**

A Thesis
Presented to
the College of Graduate Studies of
Georgia Southern University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Kinesiology
With an Emphasis in Sport Psychology
In the Department of
Public Health

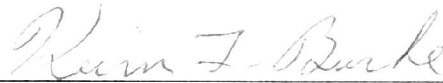
By
Kirsty L. Carrihill
May 2003



April 14, 2003

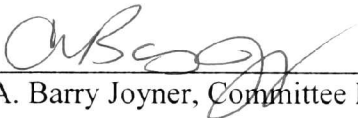
To the Graduate School:

This thesis, entitled "A Comparison of Youth Participation in Organized Sports," written by Kirsty Lee Carrihill and is presented to the College of Graduate Studies of Georgia Southern University. I recommend that it to be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science Degree in Kinesiology in the Department of Public Health.

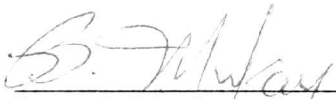


Kevin L. Burke, Thesis Director

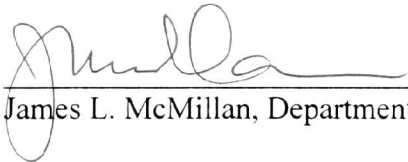
We have reviewed this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:



A. Barry Joyner, Committee Member




Barry A. Munkasy, Committee Member



James L. McMillan, Department Chair

Accepted for the College of Graduate Studies



Charles J. Hardy
Acting Dean, College of Graduate Studies

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my family and friends:

To Dad and Mom – thank you for giving me your love for sport and adventure. Thank you for teaching me how to try new things even if it meant stepping out of the stereotyped boundaries. Thank you for always telling me that I could do whatever I wanted to, no matter if the other people looked at me as if I was nuts. I may have been born a little smaller than the rest, but you were right, dynamite comes in small packages, you gave me an unreal inner strength and drive. Your love and support helped me reach yet another one of my dreams. I admire your strength, resilience, and courage. By watching you I have learned that I can do anything I desire. To all those who doubted us – we showed them!

Stuart - you are more than any ‘big sis’ could ever ask for in a brother. Thank you for all the disagreements and laughter you and I have shared over the years, when I started to become too serious about life you put me back in line and showed me how to laugh again until my stomach hurt. I am proud of the man you are becoming. Hang in there, work hard, take one day at a time, and never stop reaching for the things you want in life.

To the rest of my family and friends thank you for your support when dealing with school, love, and life. The constant e-mails, phone calls, and letters while I was away, and the smiles that greeted me at the airports on returning, I thank you and hope I can one day return the friendship and support. To my American friends, I thank you for welcoming me with open arms and accepting this ‘African’ into your life. You are all so important to me. And remember: if you are not living on the edge, then you are taking up too much space.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my heartfelt gratitude to my thesis director, Dr. Kevin L. Burke. Without your patience and foresight in sometimes just leaving me to do my own thing in my own time, my thesis would not be the paper we worked so hard for. Through you, I have gained a new perspective when looking at my own behaviors, life, and people. Master B you are the “Bomb.” I am glad I was part of the wonderful program at Georgia Southern University. Your honesty, compassion, humor, love of sport, and expertise in the field has impacted me in so many positive ways. I will never forget my time at GSU.

Dr. Barry Joyner; the enthusiasm you always showed in statistics classes is what got me through. Your looks of encouragement when I was confused and struggling helped me conquer the statistics mountain I feared. I know I was a bit slow when it came to me ‘getting it,’ and figuring out exactly what test I was supposed to be running, I don’t now how you did it, you have an endless supply of patience and love for teaching this stuff.

Dr. Barry A. Munkasy; thank you for your constant humor, for keeping me on my toes, and for always being interested in how my thesis was going. You always seemed to look forward to reading my thesis and always made sure to order a new box of red pens before doing so. I appreciate very much all the time, help, and the different perspective you always offered me.

To my fellow “colleagues” and friends, thank you for making me laugh through the good and not so good times. The days of ‘Club Vista’ will always make me smile. I could

not have survived without your rides to the grocery store or to class on those rainy days. Our outings to 'The Hat' to calm the cravings or the few moments when I busted out the air guitar were my happiest moments. If the world could have seen some of the road trips I have taken with fellow graduate friends, to places like Texas, the whole world would be laughing. Thank you, Lisa Kilps, for your never-ending support and friendship, you were always there for me, you are one in a million. A big thank you to everyone who helped me in the collection of my data, you were lifesavers.

To my divers, thank you for your time, hard work, and effort that you never hesitated to give me. Thank you for the laughs, tears, and long talks about our joys, troubles, and about life. You made me grow as a person and hopefully I had a similar impact on you. You have made such an impression on my life. Please remember to live your life to the point of tears. You never held back on the diving boards so please don't hold back in life.

Interlibrary loan; thank you for the fast and efficient work in sending me all the articles and books I constantly requested.

Dr. Diane Gill; thank you for the use of your Participation Motivation Questionnaire as the basis for collecting all the data required for the completion of my thesis.

VITA

Kirsty Lee Carrihill

04 May 1978

Nationality: Zimbabwean

kcarrihill@hotmail.com

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

- Aug – May 2001 – 03** **GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY HEAD DIVING COACH**
As the Head Diving Coach at Georgia Southern University for the last two years, I handled scheduling and preparing training times in the pool and weight room. My responsibilities also included monitoring the athlete's academic standing throughout the semester making sure that an eligible GPA was kept. I was also responsible for the diving competition schedules and traveling arrangements to various states where the diving team competes in dual meets and the Southeastern Conference Championship. I recruited athletes to possibly join the Swimming and Diving program at Georgia Southern University.
- Aug – May 2001 – 03** **GRADUATE ASSISTANT - TEACHING PHYSICAL EDUCATION**
I was responsible for teaching three physical education classes (Beginning tennis and body conditioning) that ran for an hour each class, twice per week, and contained approximately 30 students in each class. The course work consisted of two skills tests that evaluated the physical application of knowledge and two written exams that evaluated the cognitive application of knowledge taught.
- June – Sept 2002** **RESIDENT ASSISTANT - CENTER FOR TALENTED YOUTH**
As a resident assistant at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, California, I and 19 other RA's counseled and watched over approximately 450 youths for two 3-week periods. The Center for Talented Youth camp was developed under supervision of Johns Hopkins University. The youth were in the upper quartile range of intelligence and ranged from 10 to 17 years in age. The students lived on the campus for three weeks. The students took classes for approximately 5 hours of the day. When the students were not in class they were taking part in activities organized by the RA's on a daily and weekly basis. I was responsible for 40 female students for a six-week period.

Resident Assistants were said to have the toughest job because of the great amount of contact and impact RA's had on the students. I had one of the top three evaluations of all the 20 RA's and was recommended to be a Senior Resident Assistant in any future camps.

- Aug – Dec 2001** **GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY GRADUATE ASSISTANT**
A Graduate Assistant in the Leadership, Technology and Human Development within the Education Department. I assisted professors in finding research materials to be used in the professor's classes and research papers. I also helped undergraduate students register for classes and organize class schedules.
- Jan – May 2001** **GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY GRADUATE ASSISTANT**
During Spring 2001, I worked as a Graduate Assistant in the Middle Grades and Secondary Education Department. I assisted in helping professors find research materials to be used in classes and research papers.
- May - Dec 2000** **COACH AND COUNSELOR AT St. JOHN'S HIGH SCHOOL**
St. Johns Boys College, Harare, Zimbabwe, added me to their staff to develop the careers and counseling department. I organized a careers day for the 500 seniors within the school to help guide and assist them into a career path in which they were interested. Coaching was also a part of my duties. I was in charge of the U14 and U15 boy's hockey A & B teams. Those responsibilities included developing a team, coaching and officiating games. I also assisted in officiating senior matches. The U14 and U15 hockey teams I coached had their first undefeated season. I additionally coached the U15 boy's tennis A & B teams.
- May - Aug 2000** **HOCKEY AND DIVING COACH AT ARUNDEL HIGH SCHOOL**
Arundel Girls High School, Harare, Zimbabwe hired me to coach their second XI field hockey team consisting of a squad of 16 girls. The season ended with two losses, eight wins and two draws, best record to date. Five of the girls on my team managed to qualify for the Mashonaland regional team, which had never happened before. I coached the diving team in the final part of the years which consisted of 12 girls of various ages. The team placed second at the inter-schools event out of the total five of the top competing schools in the country. The second place finish was the highest the school has ever placed in over two decades.
- Aug – May 1999 – 2000** **FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY SWIMMING & DIVING TEAM MANAGER**
My responsibilities extended to both the pool deck and the administration office. The team consisted of approximately 60 swimmers and divers, plus three coaches whom I assisted. The team trained at least six times a week for a period of two hours, I aided in the running of these training sessions and swim meets. I also aided in the recruitment of students from all over the U.S. to join the well-known and highly ranked program.

- Aug 1998 - May 1999** **ASSISTANT DIVING COACH**
Leon County and Lincoln High Schools – Tallahassee, Florida, I assisted in the coaching of 20 boys and girls of various age groups. I assisted them in the selection, execution and preparation of the required dives needed to enable them to compete successfully in the Florida High Schools Diving Championships.
- May - Aug 1999** **WAITRESS**
News Café - Harare - Zimbabwe, I worked at News Café a newly opened restaurant. I worked from 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and when required over the busy periods. I was responsible for a number of tables, which consistently rotated over 30 people every hour.
- May - Aug 1997 – 1998** **FIELD HOCKEY COACH**
St. John's College - Harare - Zimbabwe, while on summer holiday from university, I coached the 14A, 14B, 15C & 15D Field Hockey teams. I was responsible for the selection of these teams, coaching, and umpiring the games. The 14A were one of two teams at the college who successfully recorded an undefeated season. I was also a field hockey coach at St. John's Preparatory School - Harare - Zimbabwe; during two successive summer holidays I coached various ages groups (8-12 years). The boys were not in a team; therefore I started at the basics, slowly developing their skills to high standards, where they were able to play a match using tactical plays with an understanding of the rules of the game and hopefully with an enjoyment in that game that they will carry with them to high school.
- 1996 - 1998 Summers** **TEMPORARY ASSISTANT**
Central Africa Building Society - Harare - Zimbabwe, Money Market/Corporate Treasury Department. This was a varied position with the requirement of good interpersonal skills; I assisted wherever necessary from answering Money Market related inquiries, data capture, and filing.
- 1993 - 2001 Summers** **ADVENTURE CAMP INSTRUCTOR**
Geoff Cox Adventure Center - an adventure camp situated in the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe. The camp was for children between 8 - 16 years old. The camp offered various activities (e.g., map reading, rappelling, mountain climbing, obstacle courses, canoeing, and survival camp) and covered subjects that are not usually taught in the classroom. Children often returned home from this camp with a completely different outlook and attitude on life. They interacted with children of different cultures and returned home aware of their abilities and increased confidence. The number of children varied from 60 to 120 at any one time for five days and nights. There was one senior instructor and usually 2/3 assistant instructors in charge of the entire group of children for the length of camp.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

2001 - 2003 **Georgia Southern University – USA**

Jan 2001 – May 2003 – Master of Science – Kinesiology (Sport Psychology)

COURSE WORK:

Research Design in Kinesiology (3 hours)

Data Analysis in Kinesiology (3 hours)

Seminar in Kinesiology (3 hours)

Psychology of Peak Performance (3 hours)

Team Dynamics (3 hours)

Psychology of Youth Sports (3 hours)

Current Issues in Sport Psychology (3 hours)

Sport Psychology Interventions (3 hours)

Sport Psychology Practicum – Completed +50 intervention hours (3 hours)

Guided Elective - Social and Ethical Issues in Sport (3 hours)

Free Elective - Introduction to Counseling (3 hours)

Directed Individual Study – Dr. Kevin L. Burke (3 hours)

Thesis (9 hours)

Total = 45 hours

1997 - 2000 **Florida State University - USA**

Major - Psychology

Minor - Business/Sports Management

1991 - 1996 **Dominican Convent High School - Harare - Zimbabwe**

1992 - ZJC Government Written Examinations

1994 - "O" Level Written Examinations - Graded in Cambridge, England

1994 - Pittmans Word Processing

1996 - "A" Level Written Examinations - Graded in Cambridge, England

1986 - 1990 **Bishopslea School - Harare - Zimbabwe**

1990 - Grade 7 Government Written Examinations

SCHOOL HISTORY

1986 - 1989 **Bishopslea School - Grade 3 to Grade 7**

ACHIEVEMENTS ATTAINED:

ATHLETICS

1988 & 1989 - Athletics Colours

1989 - Athletics Captain

1989 - New Records	-	100m Sprint
	-	75m Hurdles
	-	400m
	-	800m
	-	Long Jump
	-	Cross Country

Equaled Records	-	High Jump
Zimbabwe Lonrho Championship	-	Gold Medallist - Long Jump

SPRINGBOARD DIVING

1988 - Diving Colours
 1989 - Diving Captain
 1989 - Diving Colours – re-award
 1989 - Zimbabwe Interschools Champion (First ever at Bishopslea school)
 1989 - New Record - 1M & 3M
 1989 - Zimbabwe Junior Colours

OTHER ACCOLADES/AWARDS

1989 - School Prefect
 1989 - Field Hockey Captain
 1989 - Field Hockey Colours
 1989 - Swimming Colours
 1989 - Choir Colours (Eistedford Solo's)
 1989 - Drama Colours (Cats and Starlight Express)
 1989 - Bishopslea Sportswomen of the Year
 1989 - Maths Prize

1990 - 1996 **Dominican Convent High School - Form 1 to Form Six**

ACHIEVEMENTS ATTAINED:

SPRINGBOARD DIVING

1990 - 1996 - Unbeaten in Inter Schools Tournament
 1991 - 1996 - Zimbabwe Senior Colours
 1991 - Australian Age Groups - 4th & 14th
 1992 - Zimbabwean Age Group National Champion
 1993 - World Age Groups - 16th & 21st
 1993 - South African Nationals - 6th & 7th
 1993 - Zimbabwean Age Group National Champion
 1994 - South African Nationals - 6th & 7th
 1994 - Full School Colours
 1994 - Qualified for the Common Wealth Games
 1994 - Zimbabwean Age Group National Champion
 1995 - South African Nationals – 4th & 5th
 1995 - All Africa Games - 4th
 1995 - Zimbabwean Age Group National Champion
 1996 - Diving Captain
 1996 - South African Nationals - 4th & 5th
 1996 - Zimbabwe Olympic Team
 1996 - Zimbabwean Age Group and Open National Champion
 1997 - Zimbabwean Open National Champion
 1998 - Qualified for the Common Wealth Games
 1999 - All American at FSU
 2000 - Qualified for the Zimbabwean Olympic Team

FIELD HOCKEY

- 1992 - Ist Team - Tour to South Africa – Youngest member
- 1993 - 1996 - Selected for Mashonaland
- 1995 - Full School Colours
- 1995 - Represented Zimbabwe Under 18 team
- 1996 - Represented Zimbabwe Under 18 team
- 1994 - 1997 - Member Leading Club Field Hockey Team

OTHER ACCOLADES/AWARDS

- 1995 - Dominican Convent Sportswomen of the Year
- 1996 - School Prefect
- 1996 - Dominican Convent Sportswomen of the Year
(Only the 2nd girl to achieve this honour twice)
- 1996 - Honoured - Dominican Convent Games Captain
(Leader of entire High School Athletics)

1997 - 2000 **Florida State University - Jan 1997 - April 2000**

- 1997 - Athletic Scholarship
- 1997 - 2000 - Diving Team
- 1997 - 2000 - Represented FSU at ACC's and NCAA's
- 1999 - G.P.A = 3.48
- 1999 - All American
- 2000 - Graduated in 3.5 years with a 3.0 GPA

2001 – 2003 **Georgia Southern University** - Graduated with M.S. in Kinesiology, with a emphasis in Sport Psychology

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

Qualified Swimming Timekeeper
Qualified FINA Diving Judge
Certified in Basic First Aid
Certified in Advanced First Aid
Certified Scuba Diver
Competent on all Computer Programs

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Member of Psychology Club - Florida State University

ABSTRACT

A COMPARISON OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION MOTIVES IN ORGANIZED SPORTS

MAY 2003

KIRSTY L. CARRIHILL

B. S. FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

M. S. GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Directed by: Professor Kevin L. Burke

Youth participation in organized physical activity has increased by more than 5 million in the last decade (Smith & Smoll, 2002). Of the 48 million youth 8 to 16 years old in the United States, 20 million participated in organized sport (Gould & Petlichkoff, 1998; Seefeldt & Ewing, 1997; Smith & Smoll, 2002). Currently, the average age for youth to begin participating in organized sports in, or outside of, school is 11 years old (Klint & Weiss, 1986; Smith & Smoll, 2002). Although participation rates have increased, there are significant numbers of youth who drop out of sport. Over one-third of all participants between the ages of 10 and 17 years of age withdraw from sport every year (Linder, Johns, & Butcher, 1991). Past research has shown there were gender differences in reasons for participating in sports and that boys were more likely than girls to participate in sports (Ewing, 1996). The purpose of this study was to investigate participation motives of youth in organized sports. The Participation Motivation Questionnaire (PMQ) (Gill, Gross, & Huddleston, 1983) was completed by 300 youth (129 girls, 171 boys) ranging in age from 10

to 18 years. The participants were mainly from the southeastern sections of the United States, excluding California and Arizona, and were partaking in a variety of (n = 15 sports) organized school (n = 71), non-school (n = 104), or both school and non-school sports (n=125). Participants responded using a three-point ordinal scale with choices of ‘very important,’ ‘somewhat important,’ or ‘not at all important.’ The results indicated that youth placed high importance on having fun and developing skills when participating in organized sport. The results suggested that boys’ participation in competitive sports was motivated by the need for achievement and social status, while girls primarily participated in sports for the friendship and social aspects. However, all youth athletes rated having fun as being ‘somewhat important’ and ‘very important.’ In addition, being with friends, making new friends, and the social aspects of sports were found to be important. There was a significant difference in what motivated younger verses older youth athletes. The younger youth athletes wanted to win, do something they were good at, and be part of a team. The older youth athletes were motivated to play organized sports to be with friends or make new friends, to exercise, to have something to do, to get out the house, to receive rewards, and to compete. In agreement with previous research, having fun remained an important motive for youth sport participation.

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A Comparison of Youth Participation Motives in Organized Sports

Sport is one of the most meaningful social and cultural learning experiences in American society (Gill, Gross, & Huddleston, 1983; Longhurst & Spink, 1987). Normally youth begin to participate in sport at the early ages of five and six years old, except in sports like swimming and gymnastics where youth start as early as three years old (Klint & Weiss, 1986).

Youth Participation from 1975 to 1990

With the arrival of Little League Baseball in 1954, youth sport involvement has moved from social and youth organized activities to adult-organized programs (Ewing, Seefeldt & Brown, 1996). By 1989, there were 2.5 million youth aged 8 to 12 years old playing on more than 42,000 teams in 28 countries in baseball alone (Ewing, et al., 1996; Gould, Feltz, Horn, & Weiss, 1982). Estimates show that youth participation in organized sport has increased in the United States, from 20 million in 1978, to 35 million in 1986, and the numbers are still growing (Smith & Smoll, 2002). Increased youth sport participation occurs between ages 11 to 13 years, after which there is a steady decline (Weinberg & Gould, 2003).

Having fun, learning new skills, becoming physically fit, playing with friends, team atmosphere, excitement, challenge, energy release, and getting exercise seem to be the most important objectives for youth sport participation (Gill, et al., 1983; Gould, Feltz, & Weiss, 1985; Longhurst & Spink, 1987). Young athletes who participate in a variety of sports generally have the same motives for involvement (Gill, et al., 1983). A majority of youth sports have no restrictions on youths' participation in organized sport regarding race, creed,

or socioeconomic status (Klint & Weiss, 1986). The most important reasons youth gave for dropping out of organized youth sport were failure to learn new skills, lack of fun, lack of team/school affiliation, lack of exercise and fitness, and failure to challenge them (Gould, et al., 1982).

Youth Participation since 1990

Youth participation in organized physical activity has increased by over 5 million in the last decade (Smoll & Smith, 2002). Of the 48 million youth in the United States between 8 and 16 years of age, 20 million are playing school and non-school youth sports (Gould & Petlichkoff, 1998; Ewing, et al., 1996; Smoll & Smith, 2002). The largest number of youth participants are involved in non-school programs (Brustad, 1993). The opportunity for youth sport participation has become a common prospect within the American culture. In the United States alone there are millions of youth ranging from 6 to 18 years old who participate in sport or some kind of physical activity (Brustad, 1993). At the present time, the average age for youth to start participating in organized sports in school, or outside of school, is 11 years old (Klint & Weiss, 1986; Smoll & Smith, 2002). This participation age is approximately five to six years older than the participation age of previous decades. Organized sporting opportunities for girls have increased in America due to the passing of Title IX in 1972, but girls' sport participation numbers are lower compared with boys (Ewing, et al., 1996). The 1994-95 season of girl's interscholastic sports had the highest participation in 25 years (Ewing, et al., 1996). Along with the growth in the number of youth who participate in sport, there is still a number of youth who drop out on a regular basis (Ewing, et al., 1996). Over one-third of all participants between the ages of 10 and 17 years of age withdraw from sport each year (Linder, Johns, & Butcher, 1991). When a child

moves from childhood to adolescence, sport participation slowly decreases (Ewing, et al., 1996; Gould, et al., 1982).

Parents often assume the role of motivator, facilitator, and occasionally coach in the life of the young athlete. In these roles parents may provide financial, emotional, and physical support. Parents can also apply pressure to the young athlete because the parents are interested in success (Smith & Smoll, 2002). Past research indicates that parental support is associated with greater enjoyment of sport, more positive appraisal of performance outcomes, and more positive appraisals of self-worth for the athlete (Smith & Smoll, 2002). Parental pressure can, however, cause discontent in sports participation, stress associated with evaluation of performance outcomes, and negative or uncertain appraisals of self-worth (Smith & Smoll, 2002).

When adolescents engage in sports, boys are twice more likely than girls to participate and be interested in sports (Ewing, et al., 1996). More than 50% of the boys in America list a team sport as a hobby compared to 29% of the girls (Ewing, et al., 1996). When girls name sports they preferred to play they tended to list individual sports such as swimming or gymnastics (Smoll & Smith, 2002). Approximately one-third of youth sport participants in America were girls, participating mainly in activities such as baseball, soccer, judo, and gymnastics. With such ranges in activities, youngsters may have varied reasons or motives for participating (Gill, Gross, & Huddleston, 1983; Klint & Weiss, 1987).

One investigation utilized 8,000 youths who played sport in America and were asked to rank the most important reasons for sport participation [Ewing & Seefeldt (1989) (as cited in Weinberg & Gould, 2003)]. The most often reasons given for youth athletes to drop out of sports participation are usually: 'other things to do,' 'it takes up too much time,' 'too much

pressure,' and 'no longer fun.' (Linder, et al., 1991). There were gender differences for the reasons why youth participated in organized sports. Boys usually ranked to have fun, performing proficiently, to improve skills, and for the excitement of competition as the top four reasons for participating in organized sport, while girls usually participated in sport to have fun, stay in shape, get exercise, and improve skills as the top four most important reasons for participating in organized sport.

Today's youth in comparison to youth of 20 years ago, choose other attractions to occupy their time. There is a trend in industrial countries to have an increasing amount of young people that are overweight due to the higher inactivity levels (Ekblom & Astrand, 2000). Physical activity levels tend to decrease with increasing age (Janz & Mahoney, 1997). Administrators of industrial countries are gradually reducing the amount of time spent on compulsory physical education in schools and colleges (Ekblom & Astrand, 2000). There is a universal trend for a drop in sports participation during high school and college (Ekblom & Astrand, 2000). Past studies have shown that many young people by the age of 13 years old have already adopted a sedentary life-style, and girls are more inactive than boys (Ekblom & Astrand, 2000). Leisure pursuits have an important role in adolescents' personal development (Fitzgerald et al., 1995). Gender differences in participation in physical activity are less apparent in elementary schools (Janz & Mahoney, 1997). The relationship between discrete physical activity intensities and behavioral attributes such as television watching and video game playing are thought to be associated with inactivity during youth (Janz & Mahoney, 1997). Television viewing and video game playing may be related to increased body weight and decreased physical activity (Ekblom & Astrand, 2000).

Participation Motives and Benefits

Participation in organized youth sport during adolescence is linked to higher educational and occupational attainment in adulthood (Smith & Smoll, 2002). Youth usually participate in organized sports for a variety of reasons, such as, to be more popular with peers. Youth involved in sports tend to be good students in school (Ewing, et al., 1996). Youth involved in co-curricular activities/sports end up earning higher grades, behave better in the classroom and drop out of school less often than non-participants (Ewing, et al., 1996).

Many positive attributes are developed through participation in sport. These qualities include: high self-esteem, motivation, good work ethic, positive general attitude, responsibility, ability to cope with stress, competitiveness, accomplishment, ability to overcome failure, teamwork, discipline, and sportspersonship (Hirschhorn & Loughhead, 2000). Adolescent boys are more likely than girls to use sports and recreation as a means of coping with stress (Hirschhorn & Loughhead, 2000).

Children's most important reasons for participating in organized sports are usually intrinsic in nature. Winning clearly is not an important reason for youth sport participation (Ewing, et al., 1996). Children with low perceptions of their ability tend to drop out. If youth do not feel confident about performing the sports skills, they tend to withdraw from sports participation (Weiss, 1993). In summary, there are several reasons why children decide to participate in sports. The purpose of this study was to determine what motivates youth to participate in organized sport. This study also examined differences in reasons for participating in organized sports due to gender, age and/or regional differences.

Methods

Participants

The participants in this study were girls (n=129) and boys (n=171) involved in school organized sports only (n=71), non-school organized sports only (n=104), or both school and non-school organized sports (n=125). There were a total of 311 youth athletes who participated in this study, however, only 300 of the questionnaire results were utilized, as 11 of the questionnaires had to be disregarded due to missing responses. The participants ranged from 10 to 18 years in age. The participants were divided into three groups: a) elementary school including grades 1 - 5, b) middle school including grades 6 - 9, and c) high school including grades 10 - 12. The youth sports examined included: soccer (n = 33), tennis (n = 15), softball (n = 24), swimming (n = 33), baseball (n = 8), football (n = 7), lacrosse (n = 3), volleyball (n = 10), ballet/dance (n = 13), cheerleading (n = 7), basketball (n = 9), track and field (n= 11), cross-country (n = 7), golf (n = 119), and other (n = 1). All participants were involved in organized sports played during the months from May to August, 2002.

Instrumentation

Gill, Gross and Huddleston (1983) designed the Participation Motivation Questionnaire (PMQ) to include possible reasons respondents may give for participating in youth sport programs. Items were selected by reviewing existing youth literature and on the basis of two pilot studies. The relative importance of various reasons for participating was assessed and responses were factor analyzed to identify general categories or dimensions of participation motivation. The PMQ assessed the motives children expressed for participating in youth sports. The children were asked to respond to 30 reasons for participating in sports

including “I like to win,” and “I like to meet new friends” using a three-point ordinal scale ranging from ‘very important,’ ‘somewhat important,’ and ‘not at all important.’ The mean importance ratings are calculated with ‘very important’ being scored as one; ‘somewhat important’ are scored as two, and ‘not at all important’ being scored as three. The 30 questions were then subdivided into eight factors with factor analysis. Factor one which accounted for 19.4% variance, included status motivation items such as to win, feeling important, be popular, gain status, do something good at, to compete, and rewards and consisted of question numbers 3, 12, 14, 20, 21, 25, and 28. Factor two (16.4% variance) included team-oriented items such as teamwork, team spirit, and being on a team, consisting of question numbers 8, 18, and 22. Factor three (12.7% variance), fitness-orientations such as getting exercise and being physically fit, consisting of question numbers 6, 15, and 24. Factor four (11.7% variance) based on energy release, release tension, something to do, travel, and to get out of the house and consisted of question numbers 4, 5, 13, 16, and 19. Factor five (10.3% variance), based on miscellaneous reasons such as parents/close friends, coaches, and equipment/facilities, consisting of question numbers 9, 27, and 30. Factor six (10.2% variance) based on skill development, such as, to improve skills, learn new skills, and go on to a higher level including questions numbers 1, 10, 23, and 26. Factor seven (10% variance), based on friendship items such as wanting to be with friends and making new friends consisted of question numbers 2 and 11. And, factor eight (9.2% variance) based on fun, action, and excitement consisted of question numbers 7, 17, and 29. PMQ reliability showed internal consistency within the Cronbach alpha coefficients for the eight derived factors accounting for participation motivation ranging from .30 (friends) and .78 (team). Factor analyses of the responses of 720 boys and 418 girls to the PMQ suggested

that the reasons for children's participation in youth sport centered on motives such as achievement, team, friendship, fitness, energy release, skill development, and fun.

Procedure

The coaches were contacted from various summer/recreational programs via e-mail to request permission to have the athletes participate in the study. The coaches received an e-mail providing background information on the research topic to be conducted and describing the reasons for the research. Information packets were assembled and then mailed to the coaches of the various sports at the summer recreational departments. Participants took part in the research before a practice session at the particular camp, where the coach granted written permission for the youth athletes to participate in this study. While the PMQ was distributed, the youth were told by the survey administration that the coaches would not have access to the completed questionnaires and there were no right or wrong answers. The packets contained information on the research, instructions on questionnaire distribution, the PMQ, coach and athlete consent forms, and a stamped and pre-addressed envelope.

Results

Demographic Data

Of the 1500 surveys, 311 were returned (return rate = 20.73%). Of the 311 surveys returned, 300 were correctly completed. The 300 participants (girls = 129 and boys = 171) came from grades 4 – 12. Elementary school participants made up only 7.7% (n=23) and the middle school participants consisted of 39.7% (n=119) of the total participant population. Therefore, the greatest amount of participants fell into the high school category, making up 52.6% (n=158). Due to the small amount of participants in the elementary and middle school categories (grades 4 – 8), a total of 47.4% (n=142) of the total participant population, the

elementary and middle school group's data were collapsed. Almost 40% (n=119) of the youth participants participated in golf. The second highest sport participated in was soccer, with swimming of the total participant population making up 11 % (n=33). Participants ranged from 10 – 18 years old with 52% (n=156) of the participants (Grades 4 – 8) ranged between the ages of 10 – 14 years old. The youth athletes started playing their respective sports between the ages of 2 – 17 years old. The average age the youth in this study started playing sports was at 7.5 years old (± 3.3 years). Due to the small amount of data from all other states, Georgia's results were compared to the total collapsed data from all the other states. The Georgia youth athletes in this study made up 78% (n=234) of the population. The other 22% (n=66) of the participants came from the states of Florida, California, Arizona, Washington, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Frequency analysis, crosstabs, and independent t-tests were used to analyze the data. The alpha level for all results was set at .05.

Main Motives for Sports Participation

A frequency analysis was performed by taking each of the PMQ questions and determining whether each question was ranked as being 'very important,' 'somewhat important,' or 'not at all important' to the youth athletes. The results were that the motive 'I like to have fun,' was ranked as being a 'very important' motive by 93% (n=279) of the participants, and 7% (n=21) ranked it as being 'somewhat important.' A total of 100% (n=300) of the participants ranked 'to have fun' as an important motive for their participation in sport. The other top ranked motives youth gave for participating in sport, were 'I want to improve my skills' (99.3%, n=298), 'I want to learn new skills' (96.7%, n=290), 'I like to do something I'm good at' (95%, n=285), and 'I like excitement' (94.7%,

n=284). The motives 'I want to get rid of energy' (52.3%, n=157) and 'I want to be popular' (45%, n=135) were rated as being 'not at all important' (See Table 1).

Significant differences were evident when examining the main motives youth involved in school sports and non-school sports valued as important. The main factors that were found to be significantly different were factor two: team-oriented – 'like teamwork,' 'like the team spirit,' and 'like being on a team,' factor three: fitness-orientation – 'want to stay in shape,' 'like to get exercise,' and 'want to be physically fit,' and factor six: skill development – 'want to improve skills,' 'want to learn new skills,' 'want to go to a higher level,' and 'like the challenge.' Youth involved in organized school sports valued the factors two, three, and six as being of importance concerning what motivates sports involvement in comparison to those youth that partook in non-school sports (See Table 2).

Gender Differences in Sport Participation

Independent t-tests were performed for the remaining research questions. The second research question examined whether girls' and boys' motives for participating in sport differ from one another. The results showed that factor 1: status motivation - 'like to win,' 'like to do something I'm good at,' 'like rewards,' 'like to compete,' 'like to feel important,' 'want to be popular,' and 'want to gain status or recognition,' factor 3: fitness-orientations – 'want to stay in shape,' 'like to get exercise,' and 'want to be physically fit,' and factor 6: skill development - 'want to improve skills,' 'want to learn new skills,' 'want to go to a higher level,' and 'like the challenge' of the PMQ showed significant gender differences. Motives from factor one and six were valued by the girls as being more important concerning participation than the boys. However, factor three: fitness-orientations of 'wanting to stay in

shape,’ ‘to get exercise,’ and ‘want to be physically fit’ was valued more important by the boys as to what motivates them to participate in sport (See Table 3).

Age Differences in Sport Participation

Significant differences were found between the two age groups for reasons chosen to participate in sport. Factors one: status motivation - ‘like to win,’ ‘like to do something I’m good at,’ ‘like rewards,’ ‘like to compete,’ ‘like to feel important,’ ‘want to be popular,’ and ‘want to gain status or recognition’ and factor six: skill development of wanting ‘to improve skills,’ ‘to learn new skills,’ ‘to go to a higher level,’ and ‘like the challenge’ were valued as being more important concerning the motives for participation within the age group of participants who are 14 years old and older. However, factor four: energy release by ‘getting rid of energy,’ ‘traveling,’ ‘relaxing/release tension,’ ‘like to have something to do,’ and ‘like to get out of the house’ was significantly more important to the 14 year olds and younger for sport participation (See Table 4).

Team versus Individual Sport Participation

The research question examining whether the motives youth gave varied depending on the participation in team versus individual sports found two main significant differences. Youth involved in individual sports valued factor three: fitness-orientation - ‘want to stay in shape,’ ‘like to get exercise,’ and ‘want to be physically fit.’ as being of more importance to sport participation than the youth involved in team sports. However, factor 6: skill development - ‘want to improve skills,’ ‘want to learn new skills,’ ‘want to go to a higher level,’ and ‘like the challenge’ was rated as being of more importance concerning what motivated sport participation in team sports (See Table 5).

Georgia and the Other States' Motives for Participation

The state-to-state motives for participating in organized youth sport showed a significant ($p = 0.023$) result in only one factor. The significant result was evident in factor one: status motivation - 'like to win,' 'like to do something I'm good at,' 'like rewards,' 'like to compete,' 'like to feel important,' 'want to be popular,' and 'want to gain status or recognition.' All the states, excluding Georgia, rated this motive as being of more value to the youth regarding motivation in sport participation (See Table 6).

Discussion

Main Motives for Sports Participation

Youth athletes who participated in school sports were found to place a higher value on motives concerning team orientation, fitness orientation, and skill development than the youth who participated in non-school sports due to school sports possibly being more competitive, with more scheduled competitions throughout the season in comparison to non-school sports that tend to be more informal in nature (Ewing et al., 1996).

Gender Differences in Sport Participation

Boys and girls want to learn and improve skills (Ekblom & Astrand, 2000; Gill, Gross, & Huddleson, 1985; Smoll & Smith, 2002). The differences between girls' and boys' responses in this study were more striking than the similarities. The key observed gender differences were that girls place greater value on the motives concerning status motivation and fitness orientations, while boys place a majority of value on fitness orientations. This is the most surprising result and does not support past research that stated boys' participation in competitive sports is associated with social status and skill achievement (Gill et al., 1985). These results contradict previously considered thought that girls participated in sport

primarily to stay in shape, to get exercise, and to become physically fit, not to gain status, recognition, skill development. The results were surprising due to the present time and societal attitudes supposedly held today where girls are more encouraged to participate in all sports, at all levels, and at any age (Gill, et al., 1985). The results indicate that motives concerning status, recognition, and skill development are more important to girls than boys ($p = 0.003$), while the results indicate that boys' center of attention for participating in sports is focused on the fitness orientation that focuses on motives of wanting 'to stay in shape,' 'to get exercise,' and 'to be physically fit.'

Age Differences in Sport Participation

A noteworthy difference found between youth that were 14 years old and younger and the youth who were older than 14 years old is that the older age group tend to value status motivation and skill development motives more, while the younger age group placed more importance in releasing energy. This is logical, as the younger youth give the impression of having additional pent up energy so parents tend to involve the child in sport to get the child out of the house or to release energy (Ewing et al., 1996), while, older youth who are still involved in sports indicated some type of enjoyment or ambition (Ewing et al., 1996). Thus, the older youth want to get better and were inclined to focus on developing the particular sports skills. Along with sport success comes the status motivation factor linked to the fondness of winning, feeling important, doing something that the youth is good at, and receiving internal or external rewards for doing well (Ewing et al., 1996).

Team versus Individual Sports Participation

Whether playing an individual or a team sport, youth athletes most important motive for participating in sports was 'to have fun.' Interestingly, youth who participated in team

sports focus for participation was mainly on skill development motives such as youth wanting 'to improve their skills,' 'learning new skills,' 'going to a higher level,' and 'the challenge.' Youth involved in individual sports motives for participation was mainly for the fitness orientations such as wanting 'to stay in shape,' 'to get exercise,' and 'to become physically fit.' These results seem sensible, as youth involved in a team sport want to improve as an athlete and do this by improving on individual aspects of that particular sport's skills (Smoll & Smith, 2002), while youth involved in an individual sport want to do well in that sport and attain success by improving on the fitness aspects accompanied by the sport (Smoll & Smith, 2002).

Georgia and the Other States' Motives for Participation

The results suggested that all the states in the study except Georgia tend to value the status motives when participating in sport. The motives the youth athletes, from the other states value as important include 'like to win,' 'like doing something that they are good at,' 'like rewards,' 'like to compete,' 'like to feel important,' 'want to be popular,' and 'like to gain status or motivation.' This result could be explained by the way youth sport programs are structured in each state. Possibly, the state of Georgia did not place as much importance in the youth sport programs as other states in this study did on winning, receiving rewards for competing in sport, or giving extra recognition to youth who play sport.

Past research suggested that winning clearly was not a common or a very important reason for participation and that youth discontinue sport participation for reasons such as a lack of fun, too much pressure from parents, dislike of the coach, and an over emphasis on winning (Weinberg & Gould, 2003). Therefore, it is vital that educators recognize these motives and modify sports programs to meet the needs youth have for sport participation.

Future research in youth sport should perhaps utilize a more qualitative design with a more diverse sample size which may reveal more information concerning what motivates youth athletes to participate in sport. Future youth research should also concentrate on the positive psychological experiences due to sports involvement such as perseverance, satisfaction, hard work, devotion, and commitment. The youth sport experience may have lasting effects on the development of children. Research indicates that youth involved in a constructive atmosphere that encourages, rewards effort, and uses correct techniques offers a healthy developmental setting for youth (Weinberg & Gould, 2003). Future studies may examine the ways adult leaders affect children's participation in sport. Knowing what may cause stress, burnout, withdrawal, enjoyment, increased rewarding experiences may help coaches and parents teach children to adapt the sporting environment to suitably correspond with what positively motivates youth sports participation.

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Table 1

Top 10 Reasons for Participating in Both School and Non-school Sports

Boys	Girls
1. To have fun (95%, $p = .001$)	1. To have fun (91%, $p = .001$)
2. Improve skills (86%, $p = .05$)	2. To be physically fit (82%, $p = .05$)
3. Go to a higher level (78%, $p = .001$)	3. Improve skills (80%, $p = .05$)
4. To compete (76%, $p = .001$)	4. Do something good at (76%, $p = .05$)
5. For the excitement (75%, $p = .05$)	5. Stay in shape (71%, $p = .005$)
6. To be physically fit (73%, $p = .05$)	6. To get exercise (67%, $p = .013$)
7. Stay in shape (71%, $p = .005$)	7. Go to a higher-level (61%, $p = .001$)
8. To learn new skills (71%, $p = .001$)	8. To learn new skills (60%, $p = .001$)
9. Do something good at (64%, $p = .05$)	9. To compete (58%, $p = .001$)
10. To get exercise (55%, $p = .013$)	10. For the excitement (54%, $p = .05$)

Table 2

Significant Factors for Participating in School or Non-school Sport

Factor	Sport Type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig.
Factor 2	School	71	4.96	1.97	0.025
	Non-school	104	4.79	1.58	
Factor 3	School	71	4.38	1.61	0.041
	Non-school	104	3.99	1.37	
Factor 6	School	71	5.59	1.84	0.023
	Non-school	104	5.18	1.47	

Table 3

Significant Gender Differences for Participating in Sport

Factor	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig.
Factor 1	Girls	129	13.24	3.64	>0.001
	Boys	171	11.60	2.80	
Factor 3	Girls	129	3.78	1.30	0.005
	Boys	171	4.29	1.50	
Factor 6	Girls	129	5.69	1.70	0.002
	Boys	171	5.00	1.46	

Table 4

Significant Age Group Differences for Participating in Sport

Factor	Age Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig.
Factor 1	14 & under	156	12.20	3.58	0.001
	> 14	144	12.43	2.95	
Factor 4	14 & under	156	9.78	2.23	0.021
	> 14	144	9.47	1.87	
Factor 6	14 & under	156	4.98	1.50	0.021
	> 14	144	5.65	1.64	

Table 5

Significant Differences for Team or Individual Sport Participation

Factor	Sport Type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig.
Factor 3	Team	102	3.84	1.25	0.03
	Individual	198	4.19	1.52	
Factor 6	Team	102	5.86	1.65	0.036
	Individual	198	5	1.5	

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Research Questions, Limitations, Delimitations, Assumptions, and Operational Definitions

Appendix A

Research Questions

The research questions were as follows:

1. What are the main motives youth athletes give for participating in organized sports?
2. Are there gender differences in the reasons given for participating in organized sports?
3. Are there age differences in the reasons given for participating in organized sports?
4. Do the motives for participating in youth sport vary depending on participation in team versus individual sports?
5. Do the reasons for participating in organized sport differ between the state of Georgia and other states in the U.S.A.?

Limitations

The study was limited by the following:

1. The sample size was small.
2. The results of each participant were based on self-reports.
3. There was a lack of randomization.
4. The majority of the youth athletes were from one state within the U.S.A.

Delimitations

The study was delimited by the following:

1. This study was representative mostly of youth athletes in the southeastern region of the United States.
2. This study included youth athletes ranging from 10 - 18 years old.
3. The Participation Motivation Questionnaire was the primary source of data collection used to assess youths' reasons for participating in organized youth sports.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made for the study:

1. That youth participants were honest when completing the questionnaire.
2. The participants understood inventory directions and put forth their best effort when completing the PMQ.
3. Participants understood that individual results would be kept confidential.

Definitions

1. Motivation: individuals are driven by the motive to achieve success, select challenging tasks and demonstrate heightened performance. Athletic motivation is a result of individual goals and/or objectives and environmental factors. Optimal athletic motivation results when an athlete's motives are matched to an athletic environment that is fulfilling (Gould, Feltz, & Weiss, 1985). Ames (1992) and Black and Weiss (1992) defined motivation as generally being divided into two areas: a) Intrinsic Motivation - strive inwardly to be competent and self-determining in their pursuit to master the task at hand, and b) Extrinsic Motivation – comes from other people in the form of medals, trophies, money, attention, etc. Children's motivation orientation influences the patterns of motivated behavior in achievement settings.
2. Mastery orientation: describes the motivational stance in which individuals define success as personal improvement and focus their efforts upon the task. A mastery-oriented individual is primarily motivated to improve personal performance and selects levels of challenge that is perceived to be appropriately challenging relative to his/her ability. A mastery-oriented person is likely to perceive failure experiences

as only temporary setbacks and to increase effort and display persistence in attempting to improve performance (Brustad, 1992).

3. Outcome orientation: describes the way in which an individual views success as performing well relative to others. The outcome-oriented individual may select a task appropriate challenge and display high levels of effort and persistence in completing a task, but only in circumstances in which he or she has a favorable self-perception of ability. When an unfavorable ability exists, the outcome-oriented person will seek to avoid the demonstration of low competence and select tasks of inappropriate challenge – either too high or too low (Brustad, 1992).
4. Dropouts: are those who cease participation before the season ends (Ewing, Seefeld & Brown, 1996). Dropouts are those who withdraw from sport altogether. There are also sport-leavers who are those youth who discontinue their participation in one particular sport only. There are also sport-transfers, who are those athletes who take up a new sport after leaving another sport (Linder, Johns, & Butcher, 1991).
5. Socialization: the process whereby individuals learn skills, traits, values, attitudes, norms, and knowledge associated with the performance of present or anticipated social roles (Brustad, 1992). Socialization into sport refers to the social and psychological influences that shape an individual's initial attraction to sport. Socialization via sport refers to the acquisition of attitudes, values, and knowledge as a consequence of sport involvement (Brustad, 1992). Socialization out of sport involves those influences that contribute to an individual discontinuing his or her sport participation (Brustad, 1992).

6. Self-esteem: is the evaluation which the individual makes regarding himself/herself.

It expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval and indicates the extent to which an individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy.

Self-esteem is a personal judgement of worthiness (Weiss, 1993).

7. Organized Youth Sports: Youth sports in the American culture have provided well organized continuance of practices and contests for children and youth. Organized youth sports as defined within the paper is usually divided into categories of youth sports programs such as:

a) Agency-Sponsored Programs are local sports programs that are sponsored by service clubs with national affiliations. The community assumes the responsibility for one sport, to the exclusion of all others. This would be considered as a non-school sport within the boundaries of this study.

b) National Youth Service Organizations sponsor a variety of programs for youth and share a commitment to implement the sports program that appeal to and are popular with the youth. These organizations include: Boys and Girls Clubs of America, Girls Incorporated, YWCA, YMCA, and Boy and Girl Scouts of America, etc. This would be considered as a non-school sport within this study.

c) Club Sports are sports programs that conduct year-round practices and competitive opportunities, fee-for services structure, the employment of salaried coaches, the use of special facilities, and the national structure of the organizations. This would be considered as a non-school sport within this study.

d) Interscholastic Athletic Programs includes the organized inter-school sports participation of boys and girls in the middle, junior and senior high school levels

(Ewing, 1996). This would be considered as a school sport within the boundaries of this study.

8. Youth: Is operationally defined as an early period of development, the time of life between childhood and maturity, a young male/female in late adolescence, or young people between the ages of 8 – 18 years old within a group (Ewing, Seefeld & Brown, 1996).

APPENDIX B

Extended Results and Discussion

Gender Differences in Sport Participation

Crosstab analyses were performed for the remaining research questions. Results concerning the research question examining whether girls' and boys' motives for participating in sport differ from one another showed that boys' main motives, rated as 'very important,' for participating in sport were usually 'to have fun' (95%, n=161), 'to improve their skills' (86%, n=147), 'to learn new skills' (75.4%, n=128), 'to go to a higher level' (78%, n=133), 'to compete' (76%, n=129), 'for the excitement' (71%, n=121), and 'for the challenge' (96.5%, n=165) (Table 7). Girls' main motives, rated as 'very important' for participating in sport were 'to have fun' (91%, n=117), 'to be physically fit' (82.2%, n=106), 'to stay in shape' (80.6%, n=104), and 'to improve their skills' (76%, n=98) (See Table 8). However, the motives 'I want to get rid of energy' (58%, n=99), 'I want to be popular' (38%, n=65), and 'My parents or close friends want me to play' (36.8%, n=63) was rated by boys (n=171) as being 'not at all important.' The motives 'To be popular' (54.3%, n=70), 'Want to get rid of energy' (45%, n=58), 'Like to travel' (44.2%, n=57), and 'My parents or close friends want me to play' (44.2%, n=57) were rated by girls (n=129) as 'not at all important.'

Age Differences in Sport Participation

The results for the age groups of youth who were 14 years old and younger rated as being 'very important' indicate that both boys' (96%, n=94) and girls' (88%, n=51) main motive is 'to have fun' (92.9%, n=145). Additional motives for boys at this age were 'to improve skills' (95.9%, n=94), and 'to go to a higher level' (88.8%, n=87). Additional motives for girls in this age group were 'to be physically fit' (86.2%, n=50), and 'to stay in shape' (81%, n=47). The older than 14 years old age group results for participating in sport

were significantly different because boys' in this age groups main motives for participating in sport were 'to have fun' (93.2%, n=68), 'to compete' (74%, n=54), and 'to improve on their skills' (72.6%, n=53), while girls' in the 14 years and older age groups main motives that were rated as being 'very important' were 'to have fun' (93%, n=66), 'to stay in shape' (80.3%, n=57), and 'to be physically fit' (79%, n=56) (See Table 9). The top motives 14 and older age group boys and girls gave rated as being 'very important' were 'to have fun' (93.1%, n=134), 'to improve my skills' (73.6%, n=106), 'to be physically fit' (72.2%, n=104), 70.8%, n=102), and 'like to do something I'm good at' (68.8%, n=99). Gender differences were present for the main motives 14 year olds and older gave for sport participation (See Table 10). However, the motives 'I want to get rid of energy' (57.7%, n=80), 'I want to be popular' (40.4%, n=56), and 'My parents or close friends want me to play' (35.9%, n=50) were rated by the 14 year olds and under (n=139) as being 'not at all important.' The motives 'I want to be popular' (50%, n=53), 'I want to get rid of energy' (46.5%, n=49), and 'My parents or close friends want me to play' (44.4%, n=47) were rated by 15 year olds and older (n=106) as being 'not at all important.'

Team versus Individual Sport Participation

The research question examining whether the motives youth gave varied depending on the participation in team versus individual sports found that the motive that was ranked as 'very important,' and was the main motive youth gave for participating in both the team and individual sports was 'to have fun' (82%, n=245.) The ongoing main motives youth gave for participating in sport showed differences based on whether the individual youth participated in a team or individual sport (See Table 11). However, the motives 'My parents or close friends want me to play' (43%, n=44), 'I want to be popular' (43%, n=44), and 'I like to

travel' (41%, n=42) were rated by youth involved in team sports (n=102) as being 'not at all important.' The motives 'I want to get rid of energy' (59%, n=117), 'I want to be popular' (46%, n=91), and 'My parents or close friends want me to play' (38.4%, n=76) were rated by youth who play individual sports (n=198) as being 'not at all important.'

Regardless of the youth athlete playing an individual or a team sport, youth athletes most important motive for participating in sports was 'to have fun.' After the top motive the results for team compared to individual sport motives vary. Interestingly, youth who participated in team sports focus for participation were mainly for physical fitness, appearance, and to stay in shape. Youth involved in individual sports motives for partaking were mainly skill development and success orientation.

Georgia and the Other States' Motives for Participation

The state-to-state motives for participating in organized youth sport showed significant ($p = 0.05$) results in only two questions from the PMQ between the states collapsed together and the state of Georgia only. The motive was 'I like to compete,' which was rated by 19.7% (n=13) of the other states as being 'not at all important.' While only 8.5% (n=20) of the state of Georgia rated that motive as being 'not at all important.' The motive 'I want to be popular,' was rated by 15.4% (n=36) of Georgia youth athletes as being 'very important' (See Table 12), while only 3% (n=2) of youth from the other states rated the previously stated motives similarly (See Table 13).

Youth athletes in Georgia reported the motives of competitiveness and popularity as being 'very important' motives for participating in sport. Competitive and popularity motives were ranked by the youth in the other states as being 'not at all important' when affecting the participation and continued participation in sport.

The results showed that fun was the most important reason for youth participants in sport. Social status was considered an important factor for the high school youth athletes and boys as reasons for participating in organized youth sport. Most of the youths' motivations for sport participation were intrinsic in nature (Weinberg & Gould, 2003). Past research suggested that winning was not a very important reason for participation and that youth discontinue sport participation for reasons such as a lack of fun, too much pressure from parents, dislike of the coach, and an over emphasis on winning (Weinberg & Gould, 2003). Most of the youth in this study had multiple motives ranked as being important for participation in sport, rather than just a single motive which agrees with Weiss (1993.) Therefore, it is vital that educators recognize these motives and modify sports programs to meet the numerous needs youth have for sports participation.

Discussion

Main Motives for Sports Participation

'To have fun' was consistently rated as an important motive regardless of gender, age, team or individual sport being played, state, and whether the youth played school sports, non-school sports, or both. Consistent with previous research, fun is important for youth participation in sport or choosing to participate in sport (Weinberg & Gould, 2003).

The motive 'my family or close friends want me to play' was not a key motive for sport participation. Due to the demographic question asking 'What is the most important reason why you first *started* to participate in your sport' responses were based on the concept that one or both of the parents played that particular sport, thus the child became interested, or the youth's friends played a particular sport and the youth wanted to be with his/her friends. Based on the previous statement, the motive 'my parents or close friends

wanted me to play' would have been expected to be an important motive for participating in organized youth sports. Possibly, children were initially persuaded by parents and/or close friends to participate in sport. Youth's continued participation and interest was provoked by the other factors such as 'to have fun' and 'improve skills.'

Gender Differences in Sport Participation

Boys and girls want to learn and improve skills (Ekblom & Astrand, 2000; Gill, et al., 1985; Smoll & Smith, 2002). The primary observed gender difference was the tendency for boys to rate the achievement status items higher than the girls. The current results support past research that boys' participation in competitive sports is associated with social status and skill achievement (Gill, et al., 1985).

Despite increases in female sport participation, boys and girls still do not participate for similar reasons in the same sport activities (Smoll & Smith, 2002). Girls participating in a variety of sports placed greater emphasis on being with friends, making new friends, staying in shape, and/or to be physically fit. The motives girls rank as being 'very important' are consistent with stereotyped beliefs that a majority of girls participate in sport primarily for the physical appearance and fitness aspects (Smoll & Smith, 2002). The gender differences found in this study were that girls tend to rate 'wanting to stay in shape,' 'wanting to relax or release tension,' 'have something to do,' 'team spirit' and 'to get out the house' as being the most important motives for participating in sport, while boys tend to rate 'parents and friends wanted them to play,' 'meet new friends,' 'rewards,' 'to compete,' and 'the challenge' as being the most important motive for participating in youth organized sports. The results indicate that motives concerning status, recognition, sports equipment,

and the facilities are more important to boys, while girls' center of attention for participating in sport is appearance related (Smoll & Smith, 2002.)

Age Differences in Sport Participation

Data on whether there were age differences in the reasons why youth participate in sport showed that youth in grade four, nine and ten tend to play more school sports, while the youth in grades seven and eight tend to play both school and non-school sports. The number of youth in grade 12 participating in school sports, non-school sports, and both school and non-school sports were similar. The 14 years old and younger (n= 156) age group tend to participate a greater part of the time in non-school sports (59.%, n=93), while the 15 years and older (n=144) age group participate a greater part of the time in organized school sports (60.6%, n=87). So, youth want to have fun when participating in sport, but improving on skills is also an important factor that may influence continued participation.

Differences were found among the two age groups on a number of motivational factors, indicating that developmental differences in participation motivation do indeed exist. The younger youth athletes rated 'to win,' 'to do something they are good at,' 'team spirit,' and 'the coach' as the most important motive for participating in youth sports. The 14 years old and older participants rated 'to meet new friends,' 'release tension,' and 'rewards' as being the most important reasons for participating in youth organized sport.

Table 7

Top 10 Reasons for Participating in Non-school Sports

Boys	Girls
1. To have fun (95%, $p = .000$)	1. To have fun (91%, $p = .000$)
2. The challenge (95%, $p = .000$)	2. Stay in shape (81%, $p = .01$)
3. Improve skills (86%, $p = .05$)	3. Be physically fit (82%, $p = .05$)
4. Got to a higher level (78%, $p = .001$)	4. Improve skills (76%, $p = .05$)
5. Learn new skills (75%, $p = .001$)	5. To get exercise (67%, $p = .001$)
6. Do something good at (75%, $p = .05$)	6. The excitement (60%, $p = .05$)
7. Be physically fit (73%, $p = .05$)	7. Learn new skills (60%, $p = .001$)
8. The excitement (71%, $p = .05$)	8. Do something good at (60%, $p = .05$)
9. Stay in shape (64%, $p = .01$)	9. Go to a higher-level (58%, $p = .001$)
10. To get exercise (55%, $p = .001$)	10. The challenge (57%, $p = .000$)

Table 8

Top 10 Reasons for Participating in School Sports

Boys	Girls
1. To have fun (97%, $p = .000$)	1. To have fun (98%, $p = .000$)
2. The challenge (94%, $p = .01$)	2. Stay in shape (84%, $p = .05$)
3. Improve skills (93%, $p = .05$)	3. To be physically fit (82%, $p = .05$)
4. Do something good at (88%, $p = .05$)	4. Improve skills (78%, $p = .05$)
5. Learn new skills (85%, $p = .001$)	5. The excitement (65%, $p = .05$)
6. To compete (81%, $p = .000$)	6. Do something good at (59%, $p = .05$)
7. Go to higher-level (80%, $p = .001$)	7. The challenge (59%, $p = .01$)
8. To be physically fit (75%, $p = .05$)	8. Learn new skills (58%, $p = .001$)
9. The excitement (67%, $p = .05$)	9. Go to a higher level (55%, $p = .001$)
10. Stay in shape (62%, $p = .05$)	10. To compete (55%, $p = .000$)

Table 9

<i>Top 10 Reasons Youth 14 Years Old and Under Gave for Participating in Sports</i>	
Boys	Girls
1. To have fun (96%, $p = .000$)	1. To have fun (88%, $p = .000$)
2. To improve my skills (96%, $p = .002$)	2. To be physically fit (86%, $p = .02$)
3. Go to a higher level (89%, $p = .000$)	3. To stay in shape (81%, $p = .001$)
4. To learn new skills (83%, $p = .002$)	4. To improve skills (78%, $p = .002$)
5. The challenge (81%, $p = .05$)	5. To learn new skills (66%, $p = .002$)
6. Do something good at (79%, $p = .01$)	6. Go to a higher level (64%, $p = .000$)
7. To compete (78%, $p = .05$)	7. Do something good at (62%, $p = .01$)
8. To be physically fit (76%, $p = .02$)	8. The challenge (59%, $p = .05$)
9. The excitement (72%, $p = .05$)	9. The excitement (59%, $p = .05$)
10. To stay in shape (65%, $p = .001$)	10. To compete (53%, $p = .05$)

Table 10

Top 10 Reasons Youth Older than 14 Years Old Gave for Participating in Sports

Boys

1. To have fun (93%, $p = .000$)
2. To compete (74%, $p = .05$)
3. Improve my skills (72%, $p = .002$)
4. The excitement (69%, $p = .05$)
5. The challenge (67%, $p = .05$)
6. To be physically fit (66%, $p = .02$)
7. Do something good at (66%, $p = .01$)
8. To learn new skills (66%, $p = .002$)
9. To stay in shape (62%, $p = .001$)
10. To get exercise (51%, $p = .05$)

Girls

1. To have fun (93%, $p = .000$)
 2. To stay in shape (80%, $p = .001$)
 3. To be physically fit (79%, $p = .02$)
 4. Improve my skills (75%, $p = .002$)
 5. Do something good at (72%, $p = .01$)
 6. To get exercise (70%, $p = .05$)
 7. The excitement (63%, $p = .05$)
 8. To compete (55%, $p = .05$)
 9. The challenge (55%, $p = .05$)
 10. To learn new skills (55%, $p = .002$)
-

Table 11

Top 10 Reasons for Participating in Team or Individual Sports***

Team	Individual
1. To have fun (84%, $p = .007$)	1. To have fun (82%, $p = .007$)
2. To be physically fit (84%, $p = .05$)	2. To improve skills (81%, $p = .000$)
3. To stay in shape (82%, $p = .05$)	3. Go to a higher level (78%, $p = .000$)
4. Do something good at (79%, $p = .05$)	4. To learn new skills (77%, $p = .002$)
5. To improve skills (72%, $p = .000$)	5. To be physically fit (72%, $p = .05$)
6. The excitement (70%, $p = .05$)	6. The challenge (71%, $p = .05$)
7. To compete (68%, $p = .000$)	7. Do something good at (66%, $p = .05$)
8. The challenge (65%, $p = .05$)	8. To stay in shape (65%, $p = .05$)
9. To learn new skills (61%, $p = .002$)	9. To compete (60%, $p = .000$)
10. Go to a higher level (55%, $p = .000$)	10. The excitement (59%, $p = .05$)

* Team sports: baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball, volleyball, cheerleading, lacrosse, and ice-hockey.

**Individual sports: cross country, golf, swimming/diving, tennis, track and field, and dance.

Table 12

Top 10 Reasons for Participating in Sports in Georgia

Boys

1. To have fun (94%, $p = .000$)
 2. Improve my skills (86%, $p = .000$)
 3. Go to a higher level (78%, $p = .05$)
 4. To learn new skills (78%, $p = .02$)
 5. To compete (75%, $p = .05$)
 6. The challenge (73%, $p = .05$)
 7. To be physically fit (73%, $p = .01$)
 8. Do something good at (72%, $p = .02$)
 9. The excitement (72%, $p = .05$)
 10. To stay in shape (65%, $p = .000$)
-

Girls

1. To have fun (90%, $p = .000$)
 2. Improve my skills (79%, $p = .000$)
 3. To stay in shape (79%, $p = .000$)
 4. To be physically fit (79%, $p = .01$)
 5. Do something good at (71%, $p = .02$)
 6. To compete (62%, $p = .05$)
 7. The excitement (62%, $p = .05$)
 8. To learn new skills (60%, $p = .02$)
 9. The challenge (59%, $p = .05$)
 10. Go to a higher level (58%, $p = .05$)
-

Table 13

Top 10 Reasons for Participating in Sports in States other than Georgia*

Boys	Girls
1. To have fun (100%, $p = .000$)	1. To have fun (92%, $p = .000$)
2. Improve skills (86%, $p = .000$)	2. To be physically fit (90%, $p = .01$)
3. The challenge (82%, $p = .05$)	3. To get exercise (87%, $p = .000$)
4. Do something good at (79%, $p = .02$)	4. To stay in shape (84%, $p = .000$)
5. Go to a higher level (79%, $p = .05$)	5. Improve skills (69%, $p = .000$)
6. To be physically fit (64%, $p = .01$)	6. The excitement (61%, $p = .05$)
7. The excitement (64%, $p = .05$)	7. Do something good at (58%, $p = .02$)
8. To learn new skills (64%, $p = .02$)	8. Go to a higher level (58%, $p = .05$)
9. To stay in shape (57%, $p = .000$)	9. To learn new skills (58%, $p = .02$)
10. To get exercise (46%, $p = .000$)	10. The challenge (50%, $p = .05$)

* States included: Florida, California, Arizona, Washington DC, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

APPENDIX C

Participation Motivation Questionnaire

Demographics QuestionnaireDate: _____ Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐ Grade completed: _____

Sport playing at camp: _____ Current Age: _____ State: _____

1) Within the past 12 months what other sports did you play:

	a) school sports team	b) non-school sports team
Baseball/T-Ball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Basketball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cross Country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Football	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Golf	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gymnastics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Soccer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Swimming & Diving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tennis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Track & field	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volleyball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2) What is the most important reason why you participate in your sport? _____

3) How old were you when you first started to participate in your sport? _____

4) What is the most important reason why you first *started* to participate in your sport? _____

Participation Motivation Questionnaire

Below are some reasons that people give for participating in sports. Read each item carefully and decide if that item describes a reason why **you** participate in your sport. Mark an "X" to indicate if that reason is very important, somewhat important, or not at all important for you.

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important
1. I want to improve my skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I want to be with my friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I like to win	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I want to get rid of energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I like to travel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I want to stay in shape	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I like excitement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I like teamwork	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. My parents/friends want me to play	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I want to learn new skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I like to meet new friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. I like to do something I'm good at	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. I want to relax/release tension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. I like rewards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. I like to get exercise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important
16. I like to have something to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I like the action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. I like the team spirit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. I like to get out of the house	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. I like to compete	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. I like to feel important	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. I like being on a team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. I want to go on to a higher level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. I want to be physically fit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. I want to be popular	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. I like the challenge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. I like the coaches or instructors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. I want to gain status or recognition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. I like to have fun	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. I like to use the equipment or facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Finally: From the reasons listed above, go back and **circle** the number of the **one** that is **most important** to you.

APPENDIX D

aches' Letter of Permission

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
Department of Public Health
College of Health & Human Sciences

Dear Coach:

I am a graduate student in the Department of Public Health at Georgia Southern University conducting a study to compare participation motives that youth have concerning organized sports. This present study is an attempt to discover what rationale children and adolescents have for participating in sport. In addition, this study will try to find out what motivates youth athletes to stay involved in organized youth sport.

This letter is to request your assistance in gathering data via the use of an informal questionnaire that your youth athletes would complete. There is, of course, no penalty should you or your athletes decide not to participate in the study. If you agree to allow your youth athletes to participate, please have them complete the attached questionnaire and then place the completed questionnaire in the self-addressed envelope provided. Completion of the questionnaire will be considered permission to use the information the youth athletes provided in the study. Please be assured that your youth athlete's responses will be kept strictly confidential. However, colleagues and myself might use the results found in this study in the future for presentations and publications.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research project, please contact me, Kirsty Lee Carrihill at (912) 764-6695 or at the following email address kcarrihill@hotmail.com. Dr. Kevin L. Burke may also be contacted concerning any questions relating to this study at (912) 681-5267 or at the following email address: kevburke@gasou.edu.

Let me thank you in advance for your assistance in this research. The results may help advance our knowledge of youth sports.

Respectfully,

Kirsty Lee Carrihill
Georgia Southern University

APPENDIX E

Informed Consent

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
Department of Public Health
College of Health & Human Sciences

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT FORM

I understand that the questionnaire I am about to complete is part of a research project currently entitled “A Comparison of Youth Participant Motives in Organized Sports” conducted by Kirsty L. Carrihill under the supervision of Dr. Kevin L. Burke.

This research is designed to examine the reasons why children decide to participate in sports, and to find out what motivates youth athletes to stay involved in organized sport. By signing below, I am agreeing to allow Kirsty L. Carrihill and colleagues to use the information I provided in presentations and publications. I understand that any relationship between myself and the information I contribute to this study will be kept confidential. I understand that I may terminate my participation in this study at any time without prejudice to myself. Given the nature of this questionnaire, I further acknowledge that the investigator may, at his/her discretion, terminate my participation in this project at any time deemed appropriate.

Should I have any questions concerning this research project, I may contact Kirsty L. Carrihill at (912) 764-6695 or Dr. Kevin L. Burke at (912) 681-5267. If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a research participant in this study, I may contact Dr. Matt Williamson, Chair of the Department Internal Review Board, at (912) 871-1820, or the Institutional Review Board Coordinator at the Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs (912) 681-5465.

Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Printed Name

Printed Name

APPENDIX F

Extended Literature Review

Sports Participation

Estimates of the number of children involved in organized or recreational sports in the United States ranges up to 30 million in any one year (Roberts, 1993). Estimates of the total number of children involved worldwide range up to 200 million (Roberts, 1993). Approximately 20 million children between the ages of 6-16 years participate in organized athletic programs (Smith & Smoll, 2002). In a high school of 2,000 students, only a handful get to participate on squads of any of the major teams, all the rest are consigned to the role of spectators at interscholastic meets (Martens, 1978). Approximately 35% of the participants planned to quit before the start of the next season (Linder, Johns, & Butcher, 1991). Over one-third of all participants between 10 and 17 years of age withdraw from sport every year for reasons such as: 'other things to do,' 'sports participation takes up too much time,' 'too much pressure to win,' and 'sports participation was no longer fun' (Linder, et al., 1991). Gender is directly linked to children's conceptions of ability, with boys reporting higher perceived competence than girls (Brustad, 1993).

Motivation

Children's games and play activities have been recognized to represent miniature models of a wide variety of cultural and social activities and concerns (Martens, 1978). Achievement behavior is behavior directed towards the attainment of self-approval, the approval of others, and is contingent upon criteria for performance competence (Ames, 1992). In sport, achievement behaviors are behaviors witnessed when participants try harder, concentrate more, persist longer, pay more attention, perform better, choose to practice longer, and join or drop out of sporting activities (Ames, 1992). Coaches use these behaviors to assess the motivation of children in sport (Roberts, 1993).

Individuals who are usually driven by the motive to achieve success selected challenging tasks and demonstrate heightened performance (Ames, 1992). Individuals who are driven by the motive to avoid failure, avoid intermediate risk and usually demonstrate low performance (Ames, 1992). The level of motivation results from the interaction of personal factors such as personality, needs and motives, situational factors such as the importance of the game or event, opponent, and the approach utilized by the coach (Roberts, 1993). Many coaches believe that motivation is genetically endowed (Roberts, 1993). Coaches assume that the inner state of motivation is innate, and if any athlete is judged to be low in motivation, then coaches do not believe that the youth athlete's motivation level will change, thus coaches often give up on the athlete (Roberts, 1993).

The major motivational variable is the expectancy of reinforcement (Ames, 1992). Thus, to maintain and increase motivation in young athletes, the athlete's motives for participation should be recognized and the athletic situation should be structured to fulfill these motives (Gould, Feltz & Weiss, 1985). Past research has found that motives for participating in gymnastics were: a) wanting to learn new skills and improve skills, b) wanting to get in shape or be stronger and be physically active, c) like to have fun, d) want a challenge, e) like to use the equipment, f) wanting to compete at higher levels, g) teamwork, and h) to do something they were good at (Klint & Weiss, 1987).

Motivation is misunderstood in the context of sport (Roberts, 1993). Motivation consists of those personality factors, social variables, and/or cognitions that come into play when a person undertakes a task at which he/she is evaluated, enters into competition with others, or attempts to attain some standard of excellence (Ames, 1992). One condition that is critical for development is adequate stimulation of optimal challenges, given the child's

capacities (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Those losing a competition usually display lower levels of intrinsic motivation and usually perceive themselves as being less competent than those who win (Vallerand, Gauvin, & Halliwell, 1986).

Coaches and athletes define spirit as the will to win. Sport psychologists refer to spirit as intrinsic motivation: the inner desire to make things happen (Black & Weiss, 1992). Motivation factors for participation usually are competence, fitness, affiliation, team aspects, competition, and fun (Weiss, 1993). Children are likely to cite multiple motives, such as skill improvement, friendships, and competition aspects, as important reasons for staying involved in a particular sport or program (Weiss, 1993). Youth athletes have diverse motives for participating in sports. Youth athletes want to have fun, seek affiliation, demonstrate power, improve skills, pursue excellence, exhibit aggression, have something to do, experience thrills and excitement, be independent, receive rewards, fulfill parental expectations, and to win (Gould & Horn, 1984). People usually attribute behavior to own interests, dispositions, and desires (Lepper, Greene & Nisbett, 1973).

The distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is critical for an understanding of development. Intrinsic motivation, the basic needs to be competent and self-determining, is the primary energizer of the development (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The environment interaction and one's innate capacities is central to intrinsic motivation development (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Children play sport for enjoyment. Curiosity and play are fundamental features of youth's behavior (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Children learn through thinking and acting. Much of this behavior is intrinsically motivated (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Intrinsically motivated children seek out optimal challenges and engage in challenges contributing to the continuing differentiation and integration of existing capacities and

structures (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Children derived greater pleasure from optimal challenges rather than from ones that were too easy or too difficult (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Rewards to children for working on optimally challenging tasks may decrease their intrinsic motivation for those tasks (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Rewards may be detrimental to development because children tend to experience being controlled, thereby undermining the children's intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Extrinsic incentives may undermine children's intrinsic interest in an activity (Lepper & Greene, 1975). Major motives found among youth baseball leagues for participating was to get acquainted with others, forming friendships, conditioning, have fun, teamwork, keep out of mischief, develop sportsmanship, and to improve on playing skills (Gould & Horn, 1984).

The dimensions of a mastery goal orientation is where success is individual progress and improvement; mistakes are viewed as a part of learning; children engage in the activity to develop new skills, the child is satisfied by achieving success and being challenged at a task; and the children are focused on developing and learning new skills (Ames, 1992). When individuals are mastery-oriented, the focus is on developing new skills, improving their own level of competence or skill, achieving personal bests, personal satisfaction, or attaining a sense of mastery based on an internalized set of standards (Ames, 1992).

Participation in Sport

Participation in sport appears to possess enormous contributor to an individual's personal growth and development (Hodge, 1989). Children progress through phases of development at different paces (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Concepts of ability vary with age (Duda, 1987). Individual differences do exist among children in what is attractive about physical activities. Furthermore, there are likely to be differences among children in the

aspects of physical activity that are deemed attractive or unattractive (Brustad, 1993).

Opportunities to play, socialize, to exert themselves physically, and be involved in competition may attract some youngsters more than others (Brustad, 1993). Klint and Weiss (1987) also found that the least ranked motives for sports participation were status related motives, energy release, and extrinsic reasons such as receiving trophies and ribbons. Coaches, teachers, and parents must be careful not to focus on immediate achievement, scores, or performance (Klint & Weiss, 1987) but focus on children's participation, involvement, interest, and goals (Klint & Weiss, 1987). The American society wants children to be active participants, to focus on skill development, to opt for those activities and challenges where youth can best develop these skills, and have positive feelings toward both the activity and involvement in the activity (Ames, 1992).

Important issues related to youth sport participation is the understanding of competitive stresses effects upon the young participant (Cohn, 1990). Children discontinue participation for reasons including interests in other activities, lack of fun, too little playing time, too little success, loss of motivation, little skill improvement, and boredom (Barnett, Smoll & Smith, 1992). Past research found that youth athletes' worries while participating in sport were not playing well, making mistakes, and stress caused by parents, coaches, and teammates (Cohn, 1990). Evidence indicated that young athletes who dropped out of sport refer to coaches' negative actions as reasons for discontinuing participation (Barnett, et al., 1992). Youth often give reasons associated with negative actions of adult leaders such as, coaches ignored them, did not teach sport skills, or played favorites (Barnett, et al., 1992).

In general, consistent reasons for remaining involved in sport have included improving skills, having fun, being with friends, experiencing excitement, increasing

competence, and developing physical fitness (Black & Weiss, 1992). These reasons were similar across age, gender, and sport type. Attrition in sport involved reasons such as conflict of interest, lack of playing time, lack of success or skill improvement, competitive stress, dislike of the coach, boredom, and injury drive kids to other sport programs or out of sport completely (Black & Weiss, 1992). Projections from the National Center for Education Statistics (1989) indicate meager increases in youth sports involvement due to: (1) a change from participation in the less competitive recreational programs to the agency-sponsored programs that have national affiliations, (2) greater recruitment and involvement of the younger-aged youth athletes, or (3) program sponsors are providing greater availability to youth sports, resulting in the participation of a higher proportion of the potential new enrolling members. There are many circumstances that hinder youth from participating in sport, such as direct and indirect costs/fees, practices and games held at times and places that are inconvenient to the participants or parents. The decrease in sport participation is especially apparent in small high schools, where rules, budget, space and personnel limit affiliation in some sports. Larger schools are likely to have a much higher percentage of students involved in athletics than smaller schools (Brustad, 1992).

Individuals who perceive themselves as competent in an activity or situation will be more likely to enjoy and sustain involvement in that activity or seek similar situations (Black & Weiss, 1992). Under normal conditions, children self-regulate the optimal level of challenge. If an activity is not sufficiently challenging, the child will move to one that is more challenging, and if it is too challenging, the child will move to one that is easier (Black & Weiss, 1992). Children tend to engage in non-optimal activities through the provision of external pressures (Black & Weiss, 1992). Organized environments, such as schools and

athletic programs, often use external pressures rather than optimal challenges to motivate children to learn, and pressure motivates different types of learning; instead of encouraging the natural, integrative process of learning (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Youth Perceptions and Competence in Sports

Children's self-perceptions and parental socialization influences may explain gender differences within children's sport involvement (Brustad, 1993). Boys have a higher perceived sport competence than girls, and boys were more likely to report that participating in and doing well at sports was important to their parents (Brustad, 1993). Around 9 to 10 years of age, children attribute performance outcomes to both ability and effort. Children 11 to 12 years of age view ability as being capable and were able to perceive competence to be low or high, and realized there is only so much that trying hard can achieve (Duda, 1987). Perceptions of success and failure are based on the perceived demonstration of high or low competence. To perceive themselves as able entails the comparison of demonstrated effort and performance outcomes with those of relevant others. Past research found that children of approximately 9 to 11 years of age usually emphasize task-involved goals in sport, whereas young adolescents approximately 12 to 14 years of age were more likely to be ego-involved (Duda, 1987). Youth gymnasts who were high in perceived physical competence were found to be motivated by skill development, while those high in perceived social competence rated team atmosphere and affiliation motives as more important than low perceived competence counterparts (Brodkin & Weiss, 1990). Participants in sport are usually reliably higher in perceived physical competence than non-participants (Roberts, Kleiber, & Duda, 1981). Children with higher perceptions of physical competence engage in physical activities allowing them to demonstrate that ability. Apparently, children who considered themselves

better than peers in an organized sport activity also consider themselves higher in physical competence in general (Roberts, et al., 1981). Children 10-14 years of age, higher in perceived physical competence, placed emphasis upon peer comparison and evaluation, coach feedback, self-referenced information (e.g., skill improvement) and attraction for sport involvement for judging personal competence (Petlichkoff, 1996).

Being competent at physical skills is very important to many children, boys in particular. It has been suggested that sporting activities may be the domain in which young boys utilize social comparison processes to determine standings among peers and to determine self-worth (Roberts, 1993). There are, however, differences between boys and girls. For boys, relative competence to teammates correlated positively only with perceived physical competence. Girls related positively with cognitive, social, and physical competence (Roberts, et al., 1981). Individuals who perceive themselves to have a relatively high level of ability in an activity not only are more likely to seek out the activity to demonstrate the ability, but also can be expected to exhibit achievement-oriented dispositions to the activity (Roberts, et al., 1981). Children who perceive themselves as high in physical competence are more likely to be participants in sport than children who perceive themselves as relatively low in physical competence (Roberts, et al., 1981).

Self-esteem was defined as an individual's evaluation of worth, perceptions of ability refer to a person's description of abilities in a particular sport domain (Petlichkoff, 1996). Self-perceptions of ability are vital in the initiation of motivated behavior. Highly competent youth who underestimate their abilities are likely to work at a level of challenge that is inappropriately low (Brustad, 1992). Acting on surroundings, exploring, testing, succeeding,

and failing, youth develop capacities and constructs more elaborate and refined internal structures, that are the basis for future actions (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Sports Competition and Success

Children's sports can be more than a means of identifying winners and losers. Young athletes should strive for excellence, for real joy comes to youngsters who know they have given their best – win or lose (Martens, 1978). What is success for one, may be failure for another. Success or failure is dependent upon the subjective assessment of comparing one's ability with that of relevant others. Success or failure may also depend upon the subjective assessment of whether one achieved mastery, learned, or improved on a task (Ames, 1992).

By understanding what physical ability means to children, more insight may be gained into youth performance, level of intensity, and persistence within the athletic realm (Duda, 1987). Sport serves important developmental functions and it is critical that children be provided with a quality experience, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will derive benefits and will continue involvement. In general, adult leaders greatly influence the impact of the sport situation on children (Barnett, Smoll & Smith, 1992). There is little doubt that the manner in which coaches interact with child athletes will help determine the nature of the child's athletic experience and ultimately the outcomes of participation (Barnett, et al., 1992). Affiliation, excellence, team atmosphere, achievement-status, excitement-challenge, fitness, energy release, skill development, fun, and friendship are generally rated as the most important incentive for sports participation in a variety of sports (Gould, Feltz & Weiss, 1985; Gould & Horn, 1984). Girls tend to place greater emphasis on friendship, being with friends, making new friends, and fun than boys (Gould, et al., 1985; Gould & Horn, 1984).

Competition is prevalent in North American culture (Vallerand, Gauvin, & Halliwell, 1986). Evaluation and competition against others is at the heart of most sporting endeavors (Duda, 1987). Although athletic competition appears to be beneficial for children's development, there are high rates of turnover in youth sports (Barnett, et al., 1992). Games and sport are an important means for building character and developing morality in children. The competitive nature of sport prepares participants for the competitive nature of life (Hodge, 1989). That is, sport participants are assumed to be socialized while participating in environments that are removed from present everyday life (Hodge, 1989). In the sport contexts, success is typically defined by success in competition. In this sense, success is unclear and unambiguous. Adhering to this belief and placing emphasis on outcomes creates a situation where children are given few opportunities to define their experiences as mastery-oriented (Roberts, 1993). If youth perceive little chance of developing the necessary skills to be valued players, then children are likely to drop out (Roberts, 1993).

The psychological climate created by parents and coaches has the effect of socializing individuals to one goal perspective or the other. Clearly, competitive climates exist in sport when winning is the criterion of success for the coaching staff (Vallerand, Gauvin, & Halliwell, 1986). Competitive sport has a mastery climate when getting better, or improvement from game to game, is the coach's criterion of success (Martens, 1978).

There are legitimate concerns about the over-emphasis on winning, competitive pressures and resulting anxiety, physical well-being of youngsters, and youth's feelings of self-worth (Ames, 1992). The overriding factor which supersedes all other concerns is the quality of adult leadership provided by the parents and coaches who guide the organized sports programs (Martens, 1978). The organized competitive sport experience consists of

individual and collective responses of youth to a serious, adult-controlled, formally established system of rules, regulations, and relationships (Hodge, 1989). The positive side of sport allows the opportunity to learn: a) cooperation wedded with competition, b) social role acceptance and the usefulness of a 'division of labor,' c) teamwork and collective interdependence (group-identity), d) appropriate demonstration of autonomy, assertiveness, and independence, e) attributes of disciplined effort, perseverance, and delay of gratification, and f) socially approved achievement behavior (Hodge, 1989). In many industrial countries, politicians, and administrators have gradually been reducing the amount of time spent on compulsory physical education in schools and colleges (Ekblom & Astrand, 2000).

Cost and Resources in Sport

In previous research youth indicated being very aware of the time, resources, money, and effort parents put into children's sport lives (Gould, et al., 1985; Gould & Horn, 1984). Coakley's (1992) research based on the Unidimensional Identity Development and External Control Model found that when youth make decisions to commit themselves to highly specialized roles or identities, parents and other adults should not take them so seriously. Therefore, youth are deprived of chances to make new decisions, claim and construct new roles and identities, and abandon old ones thus agreeing with the Unidimensional Identity Development and External Control Model. Contributing to the decline in sport participation is the fact that children develop interests in both other sports and non-sport activities. Some children will decide to drop out of a sport still being enjoyed (Petlichkoff, 1996). The financial aspects of the sport involvement are found to play a role in sport withdrawal (Linder, Johns, & Butcher, 1991). The demands and costs for being an athlete are monetary cost, less time to spend with others, balancing school and work with sport (Cohn, 1990).

Excellent opportunities are usually present for children who grow up in the middle or upper classes (Ewing, et al., 1996). Resources available enable adults and companies to sponsor organized programs in which children participate (Ewing et al., 1996). Companies sponsor organized youth sports as an avenue to ease the problems of issues such as adolescent violence, stress, social-alienation, disaffection, and unhealthy behavior (Ewing et al., 1996). Sport is said to provide youth with a perception of association, a feeling of confidence in physical abilities, an appreciation of personal health and fitness, and the maturation of social bonds with individuals and institutions (Ewing et al., 1996). While sport may provide youth with experiences that teach independence and responsibility, sport may discourage participation because of the emphasis placed on winning rather than the physical and psychological development of the participants (Ewing et al., 1996). Changing sport rules to allow for increased playing time may allow children the opportunity to learn skills, experience failure and success, have fun, gain confidence, and become independent when it comes to assessing their own performances (Ewing et al., 1996).

If the perceived costs out-weigh the perceived benefits of being involved in sport, and other activities become more attractive, some children may choose to withdraw from sport (Petlichkoff, 1996). Petlichkoff found that individuals who remained involved in sports and received little playing time had lower ratings of perceived ability than those individuals who voluntarily dropped out of sport. A small percentage of youth are eliminated from participating in sport because of program prohibitive costs (Petlichkoff, 1996).

Stress, Competition, and Burnout in Sport

Research indicated that intense competitive pressures experienced during childhood may cause young athletes to burnout from sport and to quit (Cohn, 1990). A long-term

imbalance between the demands of the situation and coping resources can have a negative impact upon a youth sport participant to the degree that a previously enjoyed activity becomes no longer fun and the individual withdraws from that sport (Cohn, 1990).

Burnout is best explained as a social problem rather than a personal failure as stated in the Unidimensional Identity Development and External Control Model (Coakley, 1992). Burnout is least likely among the following: a) athletes from backgrounds in which life chances are limited and there are no attractive identities and roles apart from being an athlete; b) athletes with access to opportunities that can be pursued in connection with sport participation; and c) athletes who were heavily rewarded for sport success and are so controlled that they do not know about available non-sport opportunities (Coakley, 1992). Prevention of stress and burnout is best done by altering a) the structure and organization of sport programs, b) social relations associated with the training and competition in sport, and c) the range of life expectancies available to young athletes (Coakley, 1992).

The most frequent sources of competitive stress found were: trying to perform up to personal standards, doing difficult plays, performing in front of a crowd, practicing less than desired, playing in poor weather, and striving to meet parental expectations (Cohn, 1990). Providing new challenges or decreasing demands, setting goals, and teaching the athletes how to relax reduces pressure for athletes (Coakley, 1992).

Withdrawal from Sport

Youth who withdraw from sport differ on achievement orientations, as well as perception of ability, from those individuals who remain involved in sport. For some athletes, a season ending or an injury may contribute to the departure from sport. Withdrawal due to injury is usually devastating psychologically to the youth athlete

(Petlichkoff, 1996). Hence, it should not be surprising that 80% of the children and adolescents who participate in organized sport drop out by the age of 17 years old (Petlichkoff, 1996). Petlichkoff found that most youth drop out of sport because of the overemphasis on winning, whereas the majority of high school-aged dropouts withdrew because of conflicts of interest. Children in programs where games emphasize winning rather than skill improvement, may experience a lack of success and eventually drop out of sport or look for alternative situations (Petlichkoff, 1996). Youth athletes who are not as capable in sports and have little effect on the outcome may develop a term called “sports learned helplessness” (Robinson & Carron, 1982). Dropping out of sport is usually the result of the youth’s needs not being met by the sport (Linder, Johns, & Butcher, 1991).

Coaches and Parents

Coaches play a crucial role in the lives of young athletes (Black & Weiss, 1992). Coaches who used more frequent praise, informational feedback, and encouragement had athletes who perceived themselves as being more competent and successful, having more enjoyment, putting forth more effort, and preferred challenging activities (Black & Weiss, 1992). In sport a coach’s goals may be evident by how practice sessions are designed, children are grouped, recognition is given, performance is evaluated, and what is seen as desirable characteristics (Ames, 1992).

Coaches must recognize that male and female athletes of various ages differ in participation motives. Coaches have choices to make about how to present information to athletes (Gould & Horn, 1984). Usually coaches agree that playing should be fun, the first priority is the participant’s well-being, physical fitness, and organized programs are safer than unorganized programs (Gould & Horn, 1984). Once a young athlete’s participation

motives are recognized, the coach can enhance this motivation through one of two general strategies: If the young athlete has desirable motives such as skill improvement, the coach can structure the environment to fulfill these needs (Gould & Horn, 1984). But if the young athlete has undesirable motives such as releasing aggression, the coach should initiate a behavior modification program to change these objectives (Gould & Horn, 1984).

Coaches and participants *choice points* are critical in determining the motivational climate during practice or competition (Roberts, 1993). By giving certain cues, rewards, and making explicit expectations, the coach structures the motivational climate of the sport context so that task-involved conceptions of ability are the criteria by which performances are evaluated (Roberts, 1993). The coach's goal preferences become manifest, and youth perceive the goal structure and act accordingly (Roberts, 1993). Youth are exposed to explicit criteria that impose on assessment within the context. The psychological climate created by parents and coaches effects the developing goal perspectives (Roberts, 1993).

A teacher, parent, or coach can encourage a particular goal orientation by making certain cues, rewards, and expectations salient (Lepper & Greene, 1975). Children tend to work better when they expect a reward (Lepper & Greene, 1975). Children who anticipated and received an extrinsic reward for engaging in an activity of interest were less likely to show interest in the activity (Lepper & Greene, 1975). Children who expect an award show less subsequent intrinsic interest in an activity than participants who do not expect to receive an award (Lepper, Greene, & Nisbett, 1973). The coach has been shown to be a salient source of development of positive self-perceptions, affect, and motivation (Petlichkoff, 1996).

Children are capable of social comparison at six or seven years old, youth appear to prefer evaluation from significant adults during middle childhood and switch to peer comparison and evaluation at later childhood and early adolescent stages (Weiss, 1993). Children 10 to 14 years of age were significantly more accurate about physical competencies than eight to nine year old children. Younger youth prefer feedback and evaluation from parents and teachers, whereas older youth were more likely to use peer comparison and evaluation (Weiss, 1993).

The athletes' perceptions of coaches' style and interactions are strongly related to motivational factors (Black & Weiss, 1992). Youth with coaches exhibiting a 'positive approach' by frequent encouragement, mistake-contingent reinforcement, and technical instruction reported a greater desire to continue their participation next season (Weiss & Ferrer-Caja, 2002). Athletes with low self-esteem appeared to benefit from playing for coaches that emphasize a positive approach in interacting with players (Brustad, 1992).

Past research found that female swimmers who perceived that coaches gave more praise and information after a desirable performance were viewed as being more successful, more competent, showed more enjoyment and effort (Black & Weiss, 1992). Male swimmers who perceived that coaches gave more praise and information following sought-after performances were viewed as being more successful, more competent and motivated (Black & Weiss, 1992; Brustad, 1992). Coaches should attempt to make practices fun, provide affiliation needs, keep practices and games exciting, develop a realistic concept of success, and provide opportunities for fitness and skill development (Gould & Horn, 1984).

Past literature on parental and coach feedback strongly suggests that the quality, rather than the quantity, of verbal and non-verbal communication is a stronger influence on

self-esteem and perceptions of competence (Petlichkoff, 1996). Reliant and appropriate feedback/reinforcement were identified as key ingredients for enhancing self-perceptions. This means that, in response to desirable performances, parents and coaches should respond with praise followed by information on how to improve on the next attempt of trial (Petlichkoff, 1996). Youth's peer group of close friends, teammates and classmates, is a salient source of competence information (Petlichkoff, 1996).

Powerful sources of self-esteem development emanate from appraisals and social comparisons with significant others in the child's life, such as parents, friends, coaches, and siblings (Weiss, 1993). Children's self-perceptions may be influenced by a variety of socialization processes, including role modeling (Brustad, 1992). Children may adopt behaviors and performance standards by observing the behaviors of family members and peers (Brustad, 1992). Children under the age of 10 years have been found to rely more heavily upon a) adult feedback, b) game outcome, and c) attraction toward or enjoyment of sport than do children 10-14 years of age (Brodkin & Weiss, 1990). Older youth prefer peer comparison and evaluation as a primary means of judging competence (Brodkin & Weiss, 1990). Younger youth prefer evaluative feedback from adults as a source of judging competence (Brodkin & Weiss, 1990). However, older athletes were more accurate with perceived competence than younger athletes (Brodkin & Weiss, 1990; Brustad, 1992).

The reliance on peer group begins to decline in later youth (16-18 years), and greater emphasis is placed on self-referenced information such as a degree of exerted effort, skill improvement over time, self-motivation and personal goal achievement (Petlichkoff, 1996). Strong differences were found between girls and boys involved in sports. Both boys and

girls indicated importance for boys to have ability in sport, and boys indicated that it was more important to their parents that they do well and participate in sport (Petlichkoff, 1996).

Parents are presumed to influence children's judgments by communicating the beliefs about the child's likelihood of success and the relative value of the various achievement areas (Brustad, 1993). Perceived physical competence was an extremely important variable in explaining differences in children's attraction to physical activity. Thus, parental influences, children's gender, and children's self-perceptions characteristics all appear to be instrumental in shaping children's attraction to physical activity (Brustad, 1993). Parental influence, particularly parental support, was consistently related to youths' physical activity (McGuire, Neumark-Sztainer, & Story, 2002).

Past research has anticipated that parents with favorable orientations toward physical activity will provide children with more encouragement (Brustad, 1993). Higher levels of encouragement would then translate into greater perceived competence. Higher levels of perceived competence would in turn be linked to greater attraction to physical activity (Brustad, 1993). The nature and extent of young children's physical play opportunities depends greatly upon the set of beliefs and expectations held by parents, particularly such beliefs and expectations concerning gender (Brustad, 1992). Parents who express high levels of enjoyment for physical activity usually encourage children's physical activity more. Boys tend to need more encouragement to be physically active than the girls need (Brustad, 1993).

Parents who express greater encouragement are more likely to provide opportunities for children to be physically active and to communicate higher expectancies of their child's ability in physical activity (Martens, 1978). Parents may frustrate children by making them

feel inadequate because they do not play soccer, when the sons/daughters may be more inclined toward a musical instrument (Martens, 1978).

Alternative Activities Displacing Sport

The national average in 1997 was 4-6 hours per day of television viewing and video game playing and/or computer use for adolescents (Janz & Mahoney, 1997). Studies show the average body weight for adolescents within the last 25 years has increased (Ekblom & Astrand, 2000). The relationship between television viewing and physical activity remains statistically significant and findings suggest that total hours of after-school television viewing appears to have an association with the lack of motivation for physical activity amongst adolescents (Robinson, et al., 1993). There was a significant relationship between the time spent in physical activity and television viewing (McGuire, Neumark-Sztainer, & Story, 2002). Studies have shown that television viewing is related to increased body weight and decreased physical activity (McGuire, et al., 2002). Youth had reported watching on average over 18 hours of television per week and television viewing was positively related to the decrease in physical activity level (McGuire, et al., 2002). Janz and Mahoney (1997) found that boys watched between 58-140 minutes a day of television, in addition to playing between 37-70 minutes of video games daily. Girls watch television for 55-120 minutes and played video games for 9-20 minutes daily. Twice as many adolescent boys spend more time playing video games, playing on the computer, and watching television games than adolescent girls (Janz & Mahoney, 1997). These amounts were predicted to increase as much as 5-10 times as many minutes within the near future due to more video games, more television channels, digital video disks, computers, and e-mail (Janz & Mahoney, 1997).

Activity levels of youth were predicted to drop by a third to half the total participation amounts within the next five or more years. By 13 years old many youth have already adopted a sedentary life-style, with girls usually more inactive than boys. Only a minority of adolescents reach fairly modest levels of regular activity two to three times per week that lasts 20 minutes or more each time (Ekblom & Astrand, 2000).

Younger and older adolescents watch an equal amount of television. White adolescents were more active than those of other racial groups (McGuire, et al., 2002). According to Robinson, et al., (1993) 6 - 11 year old children in the United States watch an average of more than 23 hours of television per week, while 12 through 17 year olds watch an average of more than 21 hours per week. Familial, peer, and self-concerns about health and fitness were related to increased levels of physical activity and decreased levels of television viewing (McGuire, et al., 2002).

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APPENDIX G

Institutional Review Board

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD RESEARCH PROPOSAL FORM FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

The purpose of this information is to provide the IRB with sufficient data to understand the use of and safeguards for human participants in your research proposal. The Board is not concerned with evaluating the quality or focus of your research, but only the use of human participants. Please reproduce this form (exactly) on your word processor. Please be as concise and brief as possible in providing the requested information.

I. Statement of the problem to be studied.

The purpose of this study is to find out what motivation children and adolescents have for participating in sport. The participants in this study will be female and male youth athletes who are involved in organized sports. The participants will range from 8 to 18 years in age and are participating in a variety of sports. There are several reasons why children decide to participate in sports. The purpose of this study was to find out the reasons children and adolescents report for participating in sport. A similar study performed in this area was done by Dr. Diane Gill in 1983 with a relatively small sample size of youth participating in only one sport. Twenty years later the results are predicted to vary greatly to the study done in 1983. Youth participation in organized physical activity has increased by over 5 million in the last decade (Smith & Smoll, 2002). Previous studies have suggested that out of the total amount of 48 million youth in the United States of America that are within the 8-16 years old age range, only 20 million of these adolescents are playing school and non-school youth sports (Smith & Smoll, 2002).

[Smoll, F. L., & Smith, R. E. (2002). *Children and youth in sport* (2nd Ed.). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.]

II. Describe your research design.

The coaches from various summer/recreational programs within the United States of America who will be involved in this research study will be contacted in person, via e-mail, and/or telephone to request permission for the athletes to participate in the study. The coaches will receive a letter giving background information on the topic of the research to be conducted and describing the reasons for the research. Information packets will be assembled and then mailed to the coaches of the various sports at the summer recreational departments. The packets will contain information instructions on how the questionnaires are to be distributed, the PMQ, consent forms, and a pre-addressed and stamped envelope to enable easy return of the PMQ. The participants in this study will be girls and boys (N = 300) involved in school organized sports and/or non-school organized sports. The participants will range from 10 to 18 years in age. The participants will be divided into three groups: a) junior school, b) middle school, and c) high school. The youth sports to be examined included: soccer, tennis, softball, swimming, baseball, football, lacrosse, volleyball, ballet/dance, cheerleading, basketball, track and field, cross-country, golf, and other. Crosstabs and frequencies will be the statistical analysis that will be performed on all

the research questions. The Alpha level will be set at .05. The variables to be examined are: gender, age, state, sport type, and school sports versus non-school sports.

III. Description of possible risk to human participants.

[If procedures involve the use of any biohazardous materials or substances (including, but not limited to, hazardous chemicals, restricted drugs, needles or other contaminable materials, and/or infectious agents) the researcher must complete the IBC Biosafety Protocol (See the DIRB Chair for appropriate forms)]

None.

IV. Description of possible benefits to human participants and society in general.

This study will benefit coaches, parents, teachers and any adult who is involved in organized youth sports. This research study will show how youths' motivation to participate in organized sport varies depending on the youth athlete's gender, age and the type of sport they are participating in. The results gathered from this study will clarify what motivates youth to participate in sports. The study will also show how girls and boys differ in their reasons and motivation for getting involved in sports. Once we better understand the motivational gender differences for participation in sport, then organizations can adjust accordingly to allow for a balanced number of girls and boys who participate in physical activity. Once organizations such as schools and recreational facilities know better what children want, at which age groups they might want certain activities, and what it would take to motivate or spark interest in children to be physically active, then a step forward may be taken to a healthier more active nation, where the youth enjoy sport and physical activity.

V. Information on participants to be utilized in the research.

[Describe the sample and sampling technique. If flyers or advertisements are used, include a copy. If using in-class methods, please provide a rationale for why the data has to be collected during class time as well as the educational benefits that the students will realize by participation.]

The participants in this study will be female and male youth athletes who will be involved in organized sports. The participants will range from 10 to 18 years in age. The youths in this study were divided into three groups a) junior school, b) middle school, and c) high school. The youth sports include: soccer, tennis, softball, swimming, baseball, football, lacrosse, volleyball, ballet/dance, cheerleading, basketball, track and field/cross country, and golf. All are recreational sports that were played during the summer months May to August. Participants will come from the southeastern region of the United States of America. Participants will take part in the research before a practice session where the coaches granted written permission to use the youth athletes in this study.

VI. Materials and procedures to be used.

[Please attach a copy of any questionnaire, interview questions, flyers and/or newsprint or other materials that may be used.]

The Participation Motivation Questionnaire (Gill, Gross, & Huddleston, 1983) assesses the motives children express for participating in youth sports. The PMQ asks children what reasons they have for participating in sport using a three-point ordinal scale ranging from 'very important', 'somewhat important', and 'not at all important.' The reliability of the PMQ showed that the Cronbach alpha had internal consistency coefficients of 0.30 (friends) and 0.78 (team).

VII. Procedures to secure informed consent.

N. Garretson (personal communication between Dr. Kevin L. Burke and Mr. Neil Garretson, February 26, 2002). A "Coaches Letter of Permission" is attached. Parental and participant consent was needed even though the nature of the questionnaire asks the youth athletes no personal information. Parental consent is needed for those youth participants who are under 18 years of age. The "Participant Consent Form" is attached.

[Please attach a copy of the Informed Consent Form. When deception is necessary, attach a copy of the debriefing plan.]

VIII. Procedures to gain consent and utilize minors in the research.

A "Coaches Letter of Permission" and a "Participant Consent Form" will be used to gain the consent of using minors in this study, a parental signature is required if the child is under the age of 18 years old and/or if the coach has not given his/her consent. This research study does not ask any personal information, so letters of consent for each individual youth athlete will not be necessary. The coaches from various summer/recreational programs within the southeastern region of the United States of America that will be involved in this research study will be contacted in person, via email, and/or telephone to request permission for the athletes to participate in the study. If the coaches agree to allow the youth athletes to participate, the coaches will have them complete the attached questionnaire and then place the completed questionnaire in the self-addressed envelope provided. The completion of the questionnaire will be considered permission to use the information the youth athletes provided in the study. The youth athletes' responses will be kept strictly confidential.

IX. Please provide an explanation, if any, of how the data collected will relate to illegal activities.

No data collected will relate to illegal activities.

APPENDIX H

IRB Approval Letter

To: Kirsty L. Carrihill

Public Health

Cc: Dr. Kevin L. Burke, Faculty Advisor

Public Health

From: Mr. Neil Garretson, Coordinator

Research Oversight Committees (IACUC/IBC/IRB)

Date: July 12, 2002

Subject: Status of Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in Research

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I am writing to inform you that we have completed the review of your *Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects* in your proposed research, "A Comparison of Participation Motives of Youth in Organized Sports." It is the determination of the Chair, on behalf of the Institutional Review Board, that your proposed research adequately protects the rights of human subjects. Your research is approved in accordance with the *Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects* (45 CFR §46101(b)(2)), which states: (2) Research involving the use of ... survey procedures, interview procedures (as long as) (i) information obtained (either) is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can (cannot) be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and (or) (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could (not) reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation. However, this approval is conditional upon the following revisions and/or being completed prior to the collection of any data: